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AN  
ESSAY  
ON A  
UNIFORM ORTHOGRAPHY  
FOR THE  
INDIAN LANGUAGES

AS PUBLISHED IN THE MEMOIRS OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY  
OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.

BY JOHN PICKERING, A. A. S.

CAMBRIDGE ;  
UNIV. PRESS—HILLIARD AND METCALF.

1820.



## ESSAY &c.

It is remarked by Sir William Jones, in his elegant *Dissertation on the Orthography of Asiatick Words*, that “every man, who has occasion to compose tracts on Asiatick literature, or to translate from the Asiatick languages, must always find it convenient and sometimes necessary, to express *Arabian*, *Indian*, and *Persian* words or sentences, in the characters generally used among *Europeans*; and almost every writer in those circumstances has a method of notation peculiar to himself: But none has yet appeared in the form of a complete system, so that each original sound may be rendered invariably by one appropriate symbol, conformably to the natural order of articulation, and with a due regard to the primitive power of the *Roman* alphabet, which modern Europe has in general adopted.” This accomplished scholar then adds—that “a want of attention to this object has occasioned great confusion in History and Geography;” and “that the ancient *Greeks*, who made a voluntary sacrifice of truth to the delicacy of their ears, appear to have altered by design almost all the oriental names, which they introduced into their elegant, but romantick histories; and even their more modern Geographers, who were too vain, perhaps, of their own language to

learn any other, have so strangely disguised the proper appellations of countries, cities, and rivers in Asia, that, without the guidance of the sagacious and indefatigable *M. D'Anville*, it would have been as troublesome to follow Alexander through the *Panjāb* on the Ptolemaick map of *Agathodæmon*, as actually to travel over the same country in its present state of rudeness and disorder.”\*

The inconveniences and confusion, which are here so strikingly described in the case of the *Asiatick* languages, are now beginning to be experienced by writers upon the Languages and History of the *Indian nations of America*. In this latter case, however, we are relieved from one embarrassment, which is felt in the case of the *Asiatick* tongues; for in those, as there is already a written character, and an established alphabetic arrangement of the elementary sounds, which does not in every instance correspond with the order of our Roman alphabet, we experience a constant struggle in the mind, when we attempt to write *Asiatick* words in our letters, arising from that natural desire which we feel to represent each *Asiatick* character by one of our own, which occupies the same place in the alphabetic list. But in the languages of the *American Indians*, we have only to ascertain, in the first place, every elementary sound, and then arrange the letters, by which we may choose to represent those sounds, in the order of our own alphabet.

Until within a few years past, indeed, these neglected dialects, like the devoted race of men, who have spoken them for so many ages, and who have been stripped of almost every fragment of

\* Dissertation on the Orthography of Asiatick words in Roman letters; in Sir W. Jones's Works, vol. i. p. 175, 4to edit.; and in the Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 1.

their paternal inheritance except their language, have incurred only the contempt of the people of Europe and their descendants on this continent; all of whom, with less justice than is commonly supposed, have proudly boasted of the superiority of their own more cultivated languages as well as more civilized manners. But, at length, in consequence of the impulse originally given by the Empress Catherine of Russia, and subsequently by the illustrious Adelung, Vater, and other German literati, whose indefatigable diligence and zeal will not suffer the remotest corner of the globe nor the most uninviting department of human knowledge to remain unexplored, we are beginning to inquire into the history and character of our degraded fellow-men of this continent, and to investigate the wonderful structure of their various dialects; which, indeed, to the philosophical inquirer, will now perhaps be found to be the most curious and interesting of all the languages of man.\*

\* My learned friend, Mr. Du Ponceau, first directed my attention to the fact here stated respecting the Empress Catherine; and I am indebted to him for the perusal of that interesting account of the eminent services rendered to literature by this extraordinary princess, entitled "Catherinens der Grossen Verdienste um die Vergleichende Sprachenkunde:" which may be rendered, *The Merits of Catherine the Great in promoting the Comparative Science of Languages.* This work was published at St. Petersburg in the year 1815, by the Hon. Frederick Adelung, whom Mr. Du Ponceau, in his *Report* on the Indian Languages (p. xix.) states to be "the nephew and worthy successor of the great Adelung," and "not inferior to his predecessor." The volume contains a particular account of the extensive plan of the Empress, and the measures taken by her to obtain vocabularies of all the languages in the world. She directed her Secretary of State to write to the powers of Europe, Asia, and America; and application was accordingly made to President Washington for our *Indian* lan-

The first fruits of these inquiries in the United States have been the able and philosophical investigations of Mr. Du Pounceau,

guages ; several specimens of which were accordingly furnished. But what will most surprise the reader will be, to learn that the Empress herself actually began the labour of this comparison of languages. In a letter to the celebrated Zimmerman, dated May 9, 1785, she says—“ Your letter drew me from the retirement in which I had kept myself for almost nine months, and which it was difficult for me to relinquish. You will hardly suspect what I was employed about in my solitude. I made a list of between two and three hundred radical words of the Russian language, and had them translated into every tongue and jargon that I could hear of ; the number of which already exceeds two hundred. Every day I took one of these words and wrote it down in all the languages I had been able to collect. . . . I grew tired of this hobby, as soon as the book upon Solitude was read through. But as I felt some regret at committing to the flames my great mass of papers, and the long hall, which I occupied in my hermitage, was quite warm enough, I requested Professor PALLAS to attend me, and after a full confession of this sin of mine, it was agreed between us that these translations should be printed, and thus made of some use to those persons, who might be willing to occupy themselves with the idle labours of others. We are now only waiting, with that view, for some specimens of the dialects of Eastern Siberia. Whether the reader shall or shall not find in the work, striking facts of various kinds, will depend upon the feelings with which he enters upon the subject, and is a matter of little concern to me.”—p. 40. Professor Pallas accordingly informed the public of Her Majesty’s intentions ; stating (among other things) that “ she had herself made a selection of such words as were the most essential, and generally in use even among the best civilized nations. . . . In that selection the preference was given to substantives and adjectives of the first necessity, and which are common to the most barbarous of languages, or which serve to trace the progress of agriculture or of any arts or elementary knowledge from one people to another. The pronouns, adverbs, and some verbs and numerals, whose great utility in the comparison of languages is acknowledged, were also admitted into the collection, in order to render this Glossary more complete and more instructive.”

and the interesting work of his experienced and worthy fellow-labourer, the Rev. Mr. Heckewelder. These publications alone, which are too well known to need a more particular notice in this place, abundantly show, what a vast field is now opening to those who wish to search into the philosophy of language, and to study man through the medium of his noblest and peculiar faculty of speech; and, at the same time that they do honour to our country, they will be read by the scholars of Europe, especially the learned Germans, with all that avidity which the characters of their authors will naturally excite. For my own part, I acknowledge, that they have occasioned my taking a deeper interest in this apparently dry and barren subject, than I could have believed to be possible in any one, however devoted he might be to philological pursuits; and I have, in consequence, been for a time allured from old and favourite studies, to which I had intended to allot the whole of that little leisure which I could spare from the duties of my profession.

At the very commencement of my inquiries, however, I found my progress impeded by a capricious and ever varying *orthography* of the Indian languages, not only among the writers of different nations, but even among those of the same country. I have, therefore, while examining words in one Indian dialect with a view to comparing them with those of another, been obliged to employ much time in first settling the spelling of a *written* word, in order to ascertain the sound of the *spoken* word; when I ought to have found nothing more to be necessary than to make the comparison, which I happened to have in view, between words whose *sounds* should have presented themselves upon the first inspection of their *written characters*. But with the present irregular mode of writing Indian words, unless a reader is conversant with the

several languages of the authors, whose remarks upon the Indian dialects may fall within his observation (which remarks too are often rendered still further unintelligible by being read in a translation) he will be very likely to imagine, that the words of a single dialect, as he sees them written by a German, a Frenchman, or an Englishman, belong to languages as widely different as those of his several authors. When, for example, a mere English reader finds the familiar names of the *Creeks* and the *Choc-taws*, the *Wabash* and the *Washita*, with many others, disguised by the French writers under the strange garb of *Eriques*, and *Tchactas*, *Ouabache* and *Ouachita*, &c.; and, among the German authors, the letters *G*, *J*, *T*, and *Z* used to express sounds which we should denote by *C*, *Y*, *D*, and *TS*, as in the words *Ganata* for *Canada*, *Japewi* for *Japewi*, *N'mizi* for *N'meetsee*, with innumerable others; (to say nothing of the totally different sounds from ours usually given by foreign writers to all the *vowels* of the Roman alphabet)—when a mere English reader, I say, finds the very same words thus variously written, he will at first view suppose that they are the names and languages of so many different tribes of Indians.\*

\* In addition to these national differences of orthography, the Rev. Mr. Heckewelder (in reply to Mr. Du Ponceau's inquiries respecting the orthography of the German writers) mentions a very singular reason for the irregularities observable in their use of the letters *c*, *g*, and *k*: "Sometimes (says he) the letters *c* and *g* are used in writing the Delaware language instead of *k*, to shew that this consonant is not pronounced too hard; but, in general, *c* and *g* have been used as substitutes for *k*, because our printers had not a sufficient supply of types for that character." *Correspondence of Heckewelder and Du Ponceau*, p. 382. The state of our country at the present day is such, that this will no longer be an apology for the irregularity in question. It may be added, as Mr. Du Ponceau justly remarks in a letter to me, that "a German ear, unless very delicate, does not ordinarily discriminate between *k* or *c* hard, and *g*, between *p* and *b*, nor between *d* and *t*. To a German only would it have occurred, to substitute *g* for *k*."

The perplexity I felt from this uncertainty in our Indian orthography, which so much increases the labour of studies that are in themselves sufficiently dry and forbidding to most persons, led me to consider more particularly than I had ever before done, the expediency of adopting *a uniform orthography* for the Indian, as well as other languages, which have no established written characters; and I now beg leave to submit to the Academy the few reflections which have occurred to me on this subject. Imperfect and little interesting as the remarks may be, they will be received, I have no doubt, with all that candour to which they may be entitled.\* They will have produced some good, if they should stimulate any of my countrymen, who have more leisure and more favourable opportunities than fall to my lot, to pursue the inquiry; an inquiry, which, while it promotes the common cause of learning, is peculiarly within the province of American scholars, and will richly reward us in the honour we shall acquire with the learned of Europe; who, it should be remembered, have a right to expect from us, and are eagerly looking for every species of information respecting this continent.

Nor will discussions relative to the languages of the American Indians be among the least interesting which we can offer to Europeans, or the least important in themselves. For, if the origin of the population of this Continent is, as all admit, a most interesting and important question; and if we can more successfully arrive at the solution of it, by tracing the progress of the various nations of men over different regions of the globe, through the

\* Those, who are acquainted with Mr. Du Ponceau's Essay on English Phonology (and no scholar in our country is ignorant of that valuable publication) will perceive, that the present paper is only an application of the general principles which are there stated, to the class of the *Indian Languages*.

medium of their languages, than in any other manner (which every day's experience renders more and more probable); then it is undeniable, that a careful inquiry into the languages of a people, who were formerly the possessors of one entire hemisphere, is a subject of great moment to the inhabitants of the old as well as the new world. And, as naturalists are now investigating the structure and history of the globe itself, by collecting fragments of the component parts, from the summits of its mountains to the depths of its seas, so we must study the constitution and history of its possessor, man, by collecting specimens of him, especially of his distinguishing characteristick, language, from the most remote and barbarous, as well as the most refined portions of the race; specimens, which, indeed, with our present limited knowledge, seem to be dispersed over the earth in as extraordinary a manner, and in situations where we should as little expect to find them, as the fragments of animal and vegetable nature which we meet with in the recesses of the earth. For, as we find the productions of the ocean upon the heights of our mountains, so we discover, for example, fragments of the remote Asiatick languages imbedded, if I may use the expression, in those of the most distant extremities of Europe; as of the Sanscrit in the Russian\* and other western tongues; and sometimes we find an entire language spoken by a small body of people in the midst of various others, yet totally distinct in all respects (so far as we are yet informed) from the languages by which it is thus surrounded; as in the case of the Basque language in Spain, which, as philologists inform us, has no perceptible affinity with any of the neighbouring European tongues.†

\* *Rapports entre la langue Sanscrit et la langue Russe.* Petersburg, 1811.

† See Mr. Du Ponceau's Report on the Indian Languages, p. *xxxix*.

But, in order that we may successfully penetrate into this unexplored region of languages as barbarous and foreign to our modes of thinking, as the manners of the uncivilized people who use them, it is indispensable that we should adopt every practicable expedient to render our progress easy and pleasant. Now nothing is more clearly necessary at the very beginning, than some *common and systematic method of writing them*; whether our object is, to enable the learned of other countries and our own to study and compare the numerous varieties of human speech with all that exactness, which is essential to accurate and useful results, or whether we confine ourselves to the more practical purpose of possessing the means of communication with the various tribes on our borders, either with a view to the common concerns of life or the diffusion of the principles of our religion among them; and any investigation, which is so intimately connected as this with results of such importance, will not be thought unworthy of the attention of our countrymen. Nor will they, I trust, need further incitement to prosecute any inquiries whatever, minute as they may at first view appear, to which men of so much distinction in the literary world, as Count Volney among the French and the incomparable Sir William Jones among the English, have given importance and dignity by their laborious and learned researches.\*

\* Count Volney's elaborate work, entitled *L'Alphabet Européen appliquée aux Langues Asiatiques*, 8vo. pp. 223 (for the use of which I have been indebted to Mr. Du Ponceau since this paper was first communicated to the Academy) was published at Paris in 1819. The Dissertation of Sir William Jones, which I have already quoted, is well known to every scholar.

As various nations of Europe have already published and will continue to publish books respecting the American Indians and their languages, either with a view to the information of the learned or to the propagation of the Christian religion, it is extremely desirable, that such a *common orthography* as I have mentioned should be adopted. This would enable foreigners to use *our* books without difficulty, and, on the other hand, make theirs easy of access to us ; and it would also enable the missionaries of our own and other countries (the benevolent Germans, for example, who have been so long engaged in this duty) to cooperate with the more effect in the great object of their common labours. So far too as the study of philology alone is concerned, we should derive the important advantage of being enabled to discover at once by the eye, etymologies and affinities in the Indian dialects, which with our present orthography are only discernible by the ear.

Now what are called *vowel* sounds constitute an important part of the *Indian*, as well as other languages. In *English* each of the vowels, according to its place in a word, may represent sounds, which are totally different from each other ; and, on the other hand, we often represent one single sound by very different vowels, either taken by themselves or in combination with other letters. Our first vowel *a*, for example, is commonly said to have no less than four distinct powers, which are exemplified in the words, *fall, far, fat, fate* ; and therefore, if we should meet with the like number of *Indian* words, in which this vowel was under the same combinations as in these *English* examples, we should naturally pronounce this single letter *a* (which ought to be the representative of only one sound) in four different ways. This change of power in the vowels, it is well known, does not

take place in the languages of the continental nations of Europe ; but all those nations (I speak in general terms, without noticing the common distinctions of acute, grave, and circumflex accents, and other slight modifications of the fundamental sounds) preserve what may be called, in a general view of the subject, a uniform pronunciation of the vowels ; a pronunciation, which is generally supposed to have been handed down to our own times, in conjunction with the letters themselves, from the Romans. I have always thought, therefore, that it would be best to adopt as the *basis* of our Indian orthography, what we call the *foreign* sounds of all the vowels ; that is, the sounds which are usually given to them by those European nations, with whom we have much intercourse by books or otherwise, and who, like ourselves, use the *Roman* alphabet in their own languages. I speak with these limitations, because my object is merely *practical* ; and, for all practical purposes, it will for some time to come be best to confine our views to the family of nations I have here mentioned, and to adopt an *orthography*, which, though it may not be philosophically exact, shall be attended with the least embarrassment to them and ourselves in the common use of it. We can hereafter either modify that orthography, or adopt a new one, as our extended intercourse with other families of nations may be found to require.

In conformity with this view of the subject, the general pronunciation of the vowels will be as follows :

- a* as in *father*
- e* as in *there*
- i* as in *machine* (or like *ee*)
- o* as in *note*
- u* as in *rule*
- y* as in *you* (or like *ee*.)

Our letter *w* may also be advantageously employed, instead of the single *u*, at the beginning of certain syllables which we should otherwise write with *oo*; for, if the combination *oo* should happen to precede or follow a single *o*, thus *oo-o* or *o-oo* (for *wo* or *ow*) it makes a very awkward and inconvenient orthography; and if the *oo* should precede or follow another combination of the same kind, thus *oo-oo* (for *wu*) the inconvenience is still more palpable. Our venerable *Eliot*, whose memory will ever be revered by scholars as well as by the friends of religion, both in his *Indian Grammar* and his *Translation of the Bible*, used a character composed of two *o*'s closely united thus (ꝝ) resembling the figure 8 laid horizontally. This character answers extremely well; but as the simple *u* or *w* would always supply its place, and as both of these are familiar to the different nations of Europe, I have thought we might dispense with the character devised by *Eliot*. The Jesuit missionaries formerly taught their converts to denote this sound by the Greek character *ς*; and this is accordingly used throughout Father *Rale's* MS. Dictionary of the Norridgwock, or rather Abnaki, language, now preserved in the Library of our University in Cambridge. But, for the reasons before mentioned, I think that neither this nor *Eliot's* character will be found necessary.\*

Such, I have observed, should be the *basis* of our Indian orthography. Any modifications of these fundamental sounds, which may be discovered in the different Indian languages, may be indicated by some diacritical marks placed above or below the letter which is employed to denote the fundamental or principal sound. For this purpose I should choose, if practicable, to adopt some other marks than the common signs of accent and quantity;

\* See an account of this valuable MS. in the Appendix to the present paper.

because these signs have been so long employed to denote the usual, though vague distinctions of *grave*, *acute* and *circumflex* accents, and *long* and *short* syllables, that they would perpetually mislead readers of every nation ; besides, it may be found useful to reserve them, to be placed over those syllables which in English we call *accented*, in order to denote that part of a word, upon which the greatest force, or stress of the voice falls in pronunciation.\*

The elegant scholar, with whose remarks I have introduced this subject, and from whose well-considered opinions no man should dissent without great hesitation, after observing, that “our English alphabet and orthography are disgracefully and almost ridiculously imperfect,” recommends, for the purpose of denoting modifications of this kind, the adoption of “some of the marks used in our treatises on fluxions ;” and accordingly in his notation of Asiatick words, he makes use of either one, two, or three points placed over the letters, thus, ź, Ÿ, Ÿ.† This notation has the

\* Eliot employed two of the accents in the following manner : “ We use,” says he, “ onely two Accents, and but sometime. The acute (') to shew which syllable is first *produced* in pronouncing of the word ; which, if it be not attended to, no nation can understand their own language ; as appeareth by the witty conceit of the *Tityre tu's* : ♂ produced with the accent is a regular distinction betwixt the first and second persons plural of the Suppositive Mode ; as

*Naumog*, if we see (as in *Log*)

*Naumog*, if ye see (as in *Vogue.*)

The other accent is (") which I call *nasal* ; and it is used only upon (δ) when it is sounded in the nose, as oft it is ; or upon (ά) for the like cause.” *Indian Grammar*, p. 3. These *nasal* sounds may be more conveniently designated in the manner adopted in the *Polish* language, which will be mentioned in a subsequent part of this paper.

† Dissertation, in Jones' Works, vol. i. p. 186.

manifest advantage of great simplicity ; but on the other hand it should be considered, that these points are extremely subject to being wholly overlooked or confounded with each other both in writing and printing ; and, in the science of mathematics, from which the learned author borrows them, it is a well known fact, that those treatises on fluxions, where this method is followed, abound in errors beyond all comparison more than those, in which the French notation by *letters* instead of points is adopted.\* For this reason, therefore, marks of that kind should be used as sparingly as possible. We might, perhaps, conveniently enough designate the modified vowel by placing a small *letter* over it, as is done in the German language, where, for example, the vowel *a*, (which commonly has a sound like *ah* in English) if it has a small *e* over it (ä) takes a sound like *a* in *rate* ; and the vowel *o* with a small *e* over it (ö) loses its usual sound and takes one resembling the French *eu*. It is true, that the Germans also use two points (thus ä, ö,) to denote these modifications ; but these have been so long and so generally employed in ancient and modern languages as a *diæresis*, that it does not appear advisable now to apply them to a new use. If *points* are employed at all, it would be better to place them perpendicularly over the vowel (thus ä) and not horizontally. But perhaps the most intelligible and least ambiguous notation would be found upon experiment to be, such as is adopted in the pronouncing dictionaries of our own language, that is, the common numerals ; instead, however, of placing them *over* the letter, as is there done, it will be better to place them *under* it ; as the room above will be wanted for the

\* The learned De Sacy observes, too, that in *Arabic* the ـ (with two points) and the ـ (with three) are often confounded in the Manuscripts. See his *Arab. Gram.* vol. i. p. 18—19.

accents and marks of quantity. But, whatever mode is adopted, an explanation should be given of it, by reference to one or more of the European languages, in a *Table* or *Key*, which ought, for the present at least, to accompany all publications in the Indian languages.\*

There is, however, one class of sounds in some, if not in all the Indian dialects, I mean the *nasal* sounds, for which it seems absolutely necessary to introduce a new character; though it is always extremely desirable to avoid having recourse to this dangerous expedient in any alphabetic notation, which, like the present, is intended for a *practical* system. In those European languages with which we are most familiar, such nasal modifications are commonly denoted by subjoining certain consonants to the vowels thus modified; as *n* or *m* in the French language and some others; *ng* in the German and our own language. But nothing would be gained by adopting this method for the Indian

\* In *Pryce's Cornish Grammar and Vocabulary*, published in the year 1790, a different expedient from any above proposed is resorted to; that is, turning the letters upside down. Thus, the vowel *A* in its natural position is sounded as in *man*, but when inverted (*v*) it is to be sounded as in *fall*. This method, which does not seem to be a very eligible one, has been followed to a considerable extent in the *TsVLVKI SqOLO Clv*, or Cherokee Spelling Book, published by the Rev. Mr. Butrick, (the respectable missionary among the Cherokees) and his young assistant, Mr. D. Brown, who is one of that nation, and with whom I have had opportunities of conversing upon the subject of his language. I will here remark, by the way, as the name of this nation has been variously written, *Che-ro-kee*, *Cheer-akee*, *Chel-okee*, &c. that Mr. Brown stated the true name to be; (as we should write it in English) *Tsuh-luh-kee'*, sounding the *u* as in *but* and throwing the accent upon the last syllable; and so it is to be pronounced according to the orthography used in the title of the Spelling Book above quoted. The corruption of *ts* into *tsh* (or our *ch*) is very common in the attempts to write Indian words.

languages, in which we have it in our power to establish a new notation that shall be *systematic*, so far as may be consistent with convenience in practice; because, if we apply those consonants, *n*, *m*, or any others, which already have certain established powers in the alphabet, to this new use of indicating nasal sounds, we shall then be obliged to affix to them a sign of some sort to point out when they do not indicate such sounds; or, in other words, to show when they retain what we now call their usual powers. In the *Polish* language these nasal vowels are designated by the little mark, called in some of the foreign languages a *cedilla*, which is placed under them thus, *ä* *ë* *î* *ö* *ü*; and Mr. Du Ponceau, to whom I am indebted for this and many other valuable suggestions, observes in a letter to me, that no other method has occurred to him, which would in practice be found so convenient as this for the proposed *Indian* alphabet; an opinion, in which every man, who has weighed the various difficulties in this case, will fully concur.\* I will only add on this part of the subject, that it will be found best in practice to

\* In printing-offices where types cannot at present be had for this purpose, the nasal vowel may be printed as it is in Volney's work, p. 59, with an inverted comma subjoined to it, thus, *ä* *ë* *î* *ö* *ü*. But as this may occasion a division of the syllables of a word (which should be avoided) new types ought to be made for the nasal vowels. In respect to the division of syllables I will here add a remark from one of Mr. Du Ponceau's letters to me: "The makers of Indian Vocabularies are in the habit of *dividing their syllables*, as in the Spelling Book. This is awkward and inconvenient, and will be useless on the principle of the new alphabet." This remark, occurring thus early, may require a short explanation. The method of *dividing* the syllables will become unnecessary, because in the proposed alphabet every letter is to have a fixed and invariable sound, however it may be combined with others; and in *spelling*, every syllable, except final ones, will end with a vowel.

place these, and any other distinctive marks of this sort, *under* the letters; because the room above, as I have before observed, will be wanted for the marks of accent and quantity.\*

### DIPHTHONGS.

The mode of writing the diphthongs, which would naturally follow that of the vowels, will need but a few remarks; for, as the diphthongs will be compounded of the several vowels whose powers have already been under consideration, and those writers

\* Mr. Du Ponceau has suggested to me a method of indicating accent and quantity, in a manner which is at once simple and ingenious. He proposes, that *long* accented syllables should be marked with the *grave* accent, and *short* accented ones with the *acute*. " *Unaccented* syllables," he adds, " need no mark, being generally short." This method would be attended with no difficulty in the application, were it not for the different ideas, which different persons may affix to the terms *long* and *short* in this case. We say in English, for example, that *i* in the word *pine* is *long*, but that in *pin* it is *short*. This, to an Italian, French, or other foreign scholar, would be an absurdity; because it would be equivalent to saying, that the sound of our word *aye* and of our letter *e* (for so they would pronounce *i* in *pine* and *i* in *pin*) are the *long* and *short* of the same vocal sound; when too, as our own grammarians begin to admit, the letter *i* in the former case is a *diphthong*, and in the latter, a *vowel*. Yet, absurd as this appears, we see it carried into our methods of instruction in Latin and Greek, as well as in English. No person, however, who has given the least attention to those foreign languages, which are the most legitimate descendants from the Latin (that is, the Italian, Spanish and Portuguese) or in short, to any of the Continental languages of Europe, will suppose for a moment, that the distinction of *long* and *short* in the ancient languages was like the distinction which we make in English, in the case of the *i* and some other vowels. But this is not the place for discussing a subject, which will more properly belong to a communication on the Accents of the Greek language, which I hope to make to the Academy on a future occasion.

of the Indian languages, who may adopt the proposed orthography of the vowels, will find no difficulty in combining these in such a manner as to constitute the required diphthongs. It may not, however, be without use to observe, that there are in some of the Indian dialects diphthongal sounds, which we are accustomed to denote in English by single letters. I have found, for example, and much to my surprise, by conversation with the young Cherokee mentioned in a preceding note, that in the language of that nation they have the diphthongal sound of the long *i* in our word *pine*, and of the long *u* in our word *pure*; both of which are at length admitted to be diphthongs by some of our own grammarians, as they have always been treated by the *Continental* nations of Europe, who generally denote the first of them by *ai* and the other by *iu* or *iou*; the sounds of which may be expressed in English by *ah-ee* and *ee-oo*, pronouncing the two parts of these words as closely together as possible.

To express these diphthongal sounds, therefore, which, like the vowels, will probably in some dialects be found to be more close, and in others more open, we cannot do better than to adopt the European *ai* and *iu*; to which we may add *yu*, to be used at the beginning of words, for the reasons which will be mentioned in considering the combinations *Li* and *Ly*, under the letter *L*.

We shall also want a character for the diphthong which we denote in English by *ou* in *our*, and *ow* in *now*. Either of our modes of writing this diphthong would be ambiguous to the people of Europe; for they would in general pronounce both of them like *oo* in English. Now those nations in their own languages would express this diphthong by *au* (except that the French would write it *aou*); and as this orthography would naturally follow from the sounds to be denoted by the two

component vowels *a* and *u*, there seems to be every reason, which practical convenience could suggest, for relinquishing our own *ou* and *ow*, and adopting *au* in common with those nations.

It need hardly be observed here, that if it should be found requisite in any Indian words, to mark very distinctly the separate powers of the two component letters in the *ai*, *iu* and *au*, and thus in effect dissolve the diphthong, it may be done by means of the common *diæresis*.

## CONSONANTS.

### B.

The letter *B* may have the power which it generally has in the European languages and in our own.

### C.

The letter *C* may be entirely dispensed with, on account of its very changeable power in the European languages, and because its two most common sounds may be perfectly expressed by *K* and by *S*. Our venerable Eliot says of it—"We lay by the letter *C*, saving in *CH*, of which there is frequent use in the language."\* But, for the *CH*, it will be found advisable that we should substitute another notation, which will be mentioned in its place under the letter *T*.

### D ; DH ; DS or DZ ; and DJ, DSH or DZH.

The letter *D*, when single, may have its usual power.

*Dh* may be conveniently used to denote what Walker calls in English the *flat* sound of *th*; that is, the sound which *th* has in

\* Indian Gram. p. 2.

our words *this*, *that*, &c. and for which our Saxon ancestors had an appropriate character, but for want of which we should be obliged to write the same words, *dhis*, *dhat* &c.\*

*Ds* or *Dz* will probably be wanted in some cases, to denote the *flat* sounds corresponding to *ts*; which last is very common in the Indian languages (though often corrupted into our *ch*) and is expressed by the *German* writers by a simple *Z*; a letter which in their own language, as is well known, has the power of *ts* or *tz* in English.

*Dj*, *Dsh* or *Dzh* may be employed to express the sound of our *J*; which, for the reasons that will be given under that letter, it seems necessary to reject from the proposed system of orthography.

\* The *flat* sound of *th*. Nothing can be more unsettled and imperfect than our technical language in Grammar and Rhetoric; and this circumstance has much retarded the progress of accurate investigation in those two branches of our studies. So far as respects *sounds*, we cannot do better than to borrow terms from *Music*, which is the *Science of sounds*; and I have accordingly used the terms *flat* and *sharp* (or *grave* and *acute*) which I believe were first employed systematically in Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary, to designate the two classes of consonants often called *mutes* and *semi-mutes*, as *b*, *d*, *v*, and *p*, *t*, *f*, &c. Mr. Du Ponceau observes, that this distinction may be as good as any other; but he suggests, whether that of *inspirates* and *exspirates* would not be preferable; applying the former of these terms to the *flat* consonants, and the latter to the *sharp* ones; so that *B* will be called an *inspirate*, and *P*, an *exspirare*, &c. He is of opinion that "in pronouncing these two classes of letters, the organ in the one case expels the breath, and in the other draws it in....The *expiration*, in *t*, *th*, *f*, *p*, &c. (he remarks) is clearly and strongly to be perceived; the *inspiration* in their correlatives, perhaps not quite so much. To me it seems, that when you say *thunder*, you push the air out, when you say *that*, you draw or keep the air in as much as is possible in uttering a consonant."

**F.**

The letter **F**, whenever it shall be wanted, will have its usual power. But probably there will not be much use for it in many of the Indian dialects; for Mr. Heckewelder observes of the *Delaware* language, which is the basis of many others, that it has "no such consonants as the German *w*, or English *v*, **F**, or *r*."<sup>\*</sup>

**G, GH, GS.**

The letter **G**, whatever vowel may happen to follow it, should invariably have the sound, which we call in English its *hard* sound; and which it generally has before *a*, *o* and *u*, in the European languages as well as our own. This power of **G** is commonly traced back no farther than the times of our Saxon ancestors; but scholars have supposed, and upon no slight grounds, that this was also its common sound, or a very near approximation to its common sound among the Romans, when it was followed by either of the vowels.

**Gh** may be used to denote the *flat* guttural of the Irish, which is the corresponding sound to the *sharp* guttural, or German *ch*; which last I should prefer designating by *kh*, as Sir William Jones recommends in the Oriental languages, and as will presently be more particularly considered under the letter **K**.

**Gs** will be wanted to denote the *flat* sound of *x*, in our word *example* and other words of that form, where the letter **X** precedes the accented syllable; as **ks** will be wanted to express the *sharp* sound which *x* has in our word *exercise* and in certain others which have the **X** in the accented syllable.

\* Correspondence with Mr. Du Ponceau, p. 396. See also the Note on the letter **W** in the present communication.

*H*, either when single or in combination with others, may perform its usual office of an aspirate.

*HW* will be wanted for the purpose of denoting the sound which in English we now express by *wh*, as in *what, when, &c.*, though our Saxon ancestors used to put the *h* before the *w*, and wrote the same words *hwæt, hwænne*. The Swedes also (as Mr. Du Ponceau remarks in one of his letters to me) formerly used *hw* and *hu*; but at the present day, they as well as the Danes use *hv*.

J.

The use of the letter *J* is attended with more difficulty than any of the preceding consonants. A *German* or an *Italian* would inevitably give it the sound of our *y*.\* a *Frenchman* or a *Portuguese*, that of *zh* (or *s* in our word *pleasure*;) while a *Spaniard* would give it the strong guttural sound well known in his language. Under these circumstances, therefore, although it is extremely desirable to have *single letters* to represent *single sounds* (as we generally denominate them) yet it appears to me better on the whole to reject the letter *J*, and instead of it to adopt a combination of letters, which shall be in analogy with the common sound of our *ch* (*tsh*), which is the corresponding *sharp* sound to that of *J*. As, therefore, I shall presently propose to denote our *ch* by *tsh*, so in the present case I would supply the place of our *J*, by *dsh* or *dzh*; or, if it should be thought best, in a *practical alphabet*, to sacrifice analogy to simplicity, we might

\* Mr. Heckewelder very judiciously employs the *y* instead of *j*, which Mr. Zeisberger and the other German Missionaries always make use of. See his *Correspondence with Mr. Du Ponceau*, p. 383.

express this sound by *dj* or *dg*, as the French commonly do in writing foreign words. In the *Malay* Bible and Testament, printed by the Dutch in 1733 (the latter of which was reprinted by the English in 1818) the Dutch have adopted a character compounded of *D* and *J* closely united thus, *DJ*, *dj*, which would be preferable to *dg*; but in that case, again, if we strictly regarded analogy, we should express *ch* by *tj*, as the Dutch have done in that work. This would be a little awkward to us and not free from ambiguity; as, for example, in the name of the place where the English edition of this *Malay* Testament was reprinted, and which is expressed conformably to the above notation thus, *Tjålsi*, (to be sounded as if written *Tjelsi*) we should not immediately discover the plain English name, *Chelsea*.

In the case of this, as well as other letters of the alphabet, it will not be overlooked, that one advantage of having characters, which shall be in analogy with each other, is, that they will immediately point out to the eye many affinities, which under an irregular orthography are discoverable only by the ear; and, perhaps, in the present instance the character *dj*, which is less cumbrous than *dsh* or *dzh*, will sufficiently resemble *tsh* to answer that purpose.

#### K, KH, KS.

*K*, when single, may preserve its usual power, which is familiarly known to the European nations, though the letter itself is not used in all their alphabets.

*Kh* may be used to denote the *sharp* guttural, which the Germans express by *ch* and the Greeks by  $\chi$ ; while the corresponding *flat* guttural, as before observed, may be denoted by *gh*.

The combination *kh* is to be preferred to *ch*, because the latter would be ambiguous to Europeans in general, as well as to ourselves; for though the *Germans* would give *ch* the intended guttural sound, a *Frenchman* would pronounce it like our *sh*, and we should ourselves be in doubt whether to pronounce it like *tsh* or like *k*; while a *Spaniard* would give it the sound of *tsh*, and an *Italian*, the common unaspirated sound of *k*.

\* *Ks* will be necessary, to denote the *sharp* sound which *x* has in the word *exercise* and many others.

#### L ; and LY or LI.

The letter *L*, whether single or double, may retain its usual power.

*Ly* or *Li* may be found useful, to express the *liquid* sound of *L*, as it is called, which is heard in the foreign words *seraglio*, *intaglio*, &c. and is observable in our English word *steelyard* and some others; which, if we divide thus, *stee-lyard*, the last syllable will give us this common foreign sound with the greatest exactness. The French express the same sound by *ll* after *i*; the Italians, by *gl* before *i*; the Spaniards, by *ll*, and the Portuguese, by *lh*. But either *ly* or *li* will, I think, be attended with fewer difficulties in practice, than any of the combinations above mentioned, in a system of orthography which is to be used in common by several European nations and ourselves; and of these two, *li* and *ly*, we should ourselves in most cases, especially at the beginning of a word, give the preference to *ly*; though to foreigners, it would be a matter of indifference which of them should be adopted. It may be thought indeed, that there is no necessity for both of them; and, strictly speaking, perhaps, there is not any more than there is for retaining both of

the single letters, *i* and *y*, among the vowels and diphthongs. Yet we have ourselves been so much accustomed to the use of *y*, instead of *i*, before the other vowels, and particularly in the beginning of words and before the letter *i* itself, (where we could not without doing great violence to our habits employ the *i*,) that it seems advisable to retain *i* and *y*, and for the like reasons, the *li* and *ly*. This will also be in conformity with the actual practice of the German missionaries, who use both their *i* and their *j* (which last is equivalent to our *y*,) in writing Indian words.\*

**M.**

The letter **M** will have its usual power, which is, practically speaking, the same in the European languages in general.†

\* Perhaps it will not be found necessary to adopt any character to express the *liquid l* (or *l mouillée*;) for Mr. Du Ponceau informs me, that he has not yet met with this sound in any of the Indian languages examined by him. I once thought of using the Spanish *ll* for this sound; but upon Mr. Du Ponceau's suggestion, that there might in some Indian words be occasion to express a full and distinct sound of two *l*'s following each other, as in the Italian words, *bel-la*, *stel-la*, I abandoned it. In our own language we are not in general sensible of any difference between two *l*'s and one; but if we take a word in which the second *l* is under the accent, as in *illegal*, *illustrate*, &c. or if we pronounce two words together, the first of which ends, and the second begins, with *l*, as in *full length*, *well looking*, &c. the difference becomes more perceptible.

† The Portuguese final *m* and the French *m* and *n*, which are nasal (or the signs of a nasal sound in the vowel annexed to them) need not, in this general view, be considered as exceptions.

*N* may also retain its usual power, which (as was observed in the case of *M*) is the same in the European languages generally.\*

*Ny* or *ni* may be wanted to express the sound of *gn* in the foreign words *bagnio*, *seignior*, and which we hear in our words *convenient*, *minion*, *whinyard*, the proper name *Bunyan*, &c. The Spaniards, as is well known, have an appropriate letter for it in their alphabet, being an *n* with a mark over it, thus, *ñ*; the Portuguese denote it by *nh*, and the Italians by *gn*. But for similar reasons to those mentioned in the case of the *ly*, I think we shall find *ny* more convenient in practice than either of these.†

**P.**

The letter **P** may have its usual power.

**Q.**

This letter may be entirely dispensed with; as its place may be perfectly supplied by *K*. Some writers have used *Q* alone in writing Indian words to express the sound of *qu* or *qw*; but *kw* would, I think, be far preferable in every point of view. If the *Q* is preserved in any Indian alphabet, it may be applied to designate some uncommon modification of its usual sound; and such modification should be indicated by some mark affixed to the letter.

\* See note † on the preceding page.

† Mr. Du Ponceau tells me that this *liquid n* (or *ny*) is found in the *Caribbee* language.

## R.

*R* may preserve its common sound, which is fundamentally the same in the European languages, though uttered with very different degrees of force, or roughness, by different nations.

## S, SH.

*S* should always have its common sibilant power, and never be pronounced like *Z*.

*Sh* will be wanted, and appears to me preferable to the combinations of letters now used by some European nations, to denote that sound which we always express by *sh*, and which is common to our own and many other languages in various parts of the globe. The *French* express it by *ch*, which we have retained in the word *chaise*, and others borrowed from them. But the use of *ch*, in the Indian languages, would mislead readers of different nations; for a *German* would pronounce it as a guttural (like *kh*), an *Italian* like *k*, a *Spaniard* like *tsh*, &c. The *Germans* denote this sound of our *sh* by *sch*; which combination, besides being incumbered with one more letter than our *sh*, would indubitably mislead an *Italian*, and an *Englishman*, and perhaps readers of some other nations; for an *Italian* and an *Englishman* would pronounce *sch* like *sk* instead of *sh*. It is, doubtless, in consequence of this ambiguity in the *sch*, that we so often hear the name of that northern region, which is commonly written *Kamtschatka*, corruptly pronounced *Kam-skatka*, instead of *Kam-tchatka*, (or *Kams-tchatka*, as we ought to call it; if we wish to come as near to the *Russian* pronunciation as our organs will permit, without an unnatural effort;) for, as we borrow the orthography of this name from the *Germans*, through whose works we principally derive our information of that

country and who write it *Kamtschatka*, (with *sch*) we naturally pronounce the letters *sch* like *sk*, according to the general analogy of our own language.\* Our *sh*, then, being more simple in itself than the German *sch*, yet sufficiently near to that as well as to the French *ch*, to indicate its power in most cases, and being also an unusual combination in the European languages, would be free from the ambiguity attending the German *sch*, and not so likely to mislead readers of different nations.

The corresponding *flat* sound to *sh*, that is, our *s* in the word *pleasure* (or *j* in French,) may be denoted by *zh*, as will be noticed under the letter **Z**.†

**T ; TH ; TS and TZ ; TSH.**

The letter **T**, when single, will have its common power. It will also be used in the three following combinations :

The first of them, *th*, is always called in foreign grammars the *English TH*, and is now well understood and used by the nations of Europe, when they wish to express that sharp lisping sound which it has in our word *thin*, *thick*, &c. and which is

\* This name in the Russian language (as Mr. Du Ponceau observes) is written **KAMTSCHATKA**, the fourth letter of which is equivalent to *shtsh* in English. We ought, therefore, in strictness to write and pronounce it *Kamshchatsku*; which, if we follow the Russian letters, would in spelling be divided thus, *Kam-shtshatka*; but to make it more intelligible in English, we might write and divide thus, *Kamsh.-chatka*. In our pronunciation, however, this is generally softened either into *Kams-tshatka*, or *Kam-ihatka*.

† There would be a convenience in having these compounded characters, *sh*, *zh* and others, printed in one character, as our *sh* always used to be; and if new types are made, it may be well to attend to this point. In our own and other languages, however, no great inconvenience is felt from the use of separate letters.

supposed to have been the ancient, as it is the modern, sound of the Greek *theta*. The corresponding flat sound (which is heard in our words, *this*, *that*, &c.) should be expressed by *dh*, as I have observed under the letter *D*.

The second is *ts*; which, being formed of two letters whose powers may be called invariable, will never be ambiguous. This will be much preferable to the German *Z*, which has the power of *ts* or *tz*, but which most nations would pronounce in their own languages as we do in ours, and would therefore be misled in the pronunciation of Indian words, where this letter occurs. Thus, for example, if a Frenchman and an Englishman should happen to meet with the expression in the Delaware language, which a German would write *n'mizi* (I eat) the former of them would pronounce it *n'meezee*, and the other, *n'mizi*, (sounding the *i* as in *pine*,) both of which would be unintelligible to an Indian of that tribe; while the German alone would pronounce it correctly, as we should write it in our English manner, *n'meetsee*.

I have here spoken only of *ts* as a substitute for the German *z*; but *tz* may perhaps be required to express a slight modification of this fundamental sound, which may probably be observed in some particular dialects, or in different words of the same dialect. The acquisition of this and numberless other delicate distinctions of fundamental sounds, which may be perceived in the various Indian dialects, and the establishing of distinct characters for them, must, if practicable at all, be the result of long and careful observation on the part of those, who may be called to reside among the different tribes.

The remaining combination, *tsh*, may be employed to denote the sound of our *ch* (in *chair*, *chain*, &c.) which the French

would expresss by *tch* and the Germans by *tsch*. It would be desirable, it is true, to have a character of greater simplicity than these three letters make, and on that account our *ch* would be preferable to *tsh*; but for the reasons before given (under *kh*) it would not be expedient to adopt it. The Russians in their copious alphabet are fortunate in having a single character to denote this sound, as we have in our *J*, for the corresponding flat one; they would express our *ch* by *Ⱶ*, which resembles our *h* inverted; and if there was as much literary intercourse with the Russians, as with the Germans and other people of Europe, and the rest of the proposed alphabet was common to them and other nations, it might be found advisable to add to it this very useful Russian character.

## V.

The letter *V*, whenever it shall be wanted, will have the usual power. But probably there will not be much use for it in many of the Indian dialects, for the reasons given under the letter *F*.

## W.

This letter has been already considered in the remarks upon the vowels, at page 330.\*

\* In the *Delaware* language, (as the Rev. Mr. Heckewelder observes,) where the letter *W* is placed before a vowel, it sounds the same as in English; before a consonant it represents a *whistled* sound, of which I cannot well give you an idea on paper, &c. See his *Correspondence with Mr. Du Ponceau*, p. 396.

Mr. Du Ponceau, in a letter to me, says upon this point—"I have analysed the whistling *W* of the Delawares. It is nothing more than our *oo* consonant, *w* or *wh*, in *well*, *what*. The Delawares pronounce it immediately before a consonant without an intervening vowel; which habit enables them to do, while

**X.**

*X* is altogether unnecessary, as its two common powers may be expressed by *ks* and *gs*; and if the *x* itself should be adopted, it would be quite uncertain, both to ourselves and to readers of some other nations, which of the two sounds here mentioned was intended by it; besides which, a Spaniard would be in doubt whether to give it the first of the two sounds here mentioned, or the guttural one which the *x* has in his own language; while a Portuguese would pronounce it like our *sh*, which is its common power in his alphabet.

**Y.**

For the use of this letter, see the remarks upon the vowels, at page 829.

**Z, ZH.**

The letter *Z*, when single, will have the power it has in *French*, *English* and some other languages. In this case, however, it will be necessary for the Germans and Italians to relinquish their peculiar pronunciation of it, and to adopt the substitutes proposed in the preceding remarks; that is, *ts*, *tx*, *ds* or *dz*, as the case may be found to require in the different dialects.

*Zh* will serve to designate the corresponding *flat* sound to *sh*; that is, the sound of the *French J*, which is equivalent to our *s* in the word *pleasure*.

we cannot, unless practice has made it familiar to us; as it has to me. Take the word *wet*, you pronounce it easily; transpose the vowel and write it *wt*, a Delaware will pronounce it with the same ease; when we cannot. Try a Frenchman at pronouncing this hemistich out of *Paradise Lost*—*Heav'n's last best gift*; he will be as much embarrassed with the *rnsl*, the *stb*, and the *stg*, (which habit makes us pronounce with great rapidity and ease) as we are with the *wt* of the Delawares."

The whole Alphabet, then, of the proposed systematic Orthography, that is, the *basis* or *fundamental characters* of it, will be as represented in the following *Table*; in which the several characters are arranged according to our common alphabetical order, without any attempt being made to class the *sounds* according to their organic formation; because, useful and necessary as this would be in a philosophical investigation of the affinities of those sounds, it would not be attended with any important advantage in an alphabet, like the present, designed merely for practical use. When we are searching for a word in a dictionary, whether of the Indian or any other language, we naturally look for the *written sign* in the place where it ought to stand according to the arrangement of our own alphabet.

I may here add, what I wish to be distinctly understood, that, as it never was my plan to give a *universal* alphabet on strict philosophical principles for the use of the learned, but merely a *practical* one, to be applied to the Indian languages of North America, so I have intentionally omitted many sounds, which occur in the languages of Europe and other parts of the world, and numerous modifications of greater or less delicacy in some of the fundamental sounds which have come under my notice. Among such omitted sounds might be mentioned the various slight differences (to an unpractised ear often imperceptible) in the French *e* and other vowels, depending upon the accent affixed to them, and about which, indeed, their own writers have differed, as our own do in respect to the nicer distinctions of English pronunciation—the French *u* (German *ü*, Danish and Swedish *y*)—the French *eu* or *oeu* (German and Swedish *ö* or *ö*, Danish *ø*) &c.; to which might be added the Polish *l barrée* (or crossed *l*) which, as Mr. Du Ponceau remarks, is found in

the *Caribbee* language, and to pronounce which we must place the tongue as far back as possible on the roof of the mouth and articulate *l*. But to have overcharged the proposed alphabet with a great many niceties of this kind, (if it had been in my power to represent them all with exactness) would have had a tendency to frustrate the very object I had in view; that is, a *practical* system of orthography. In such a system, an *approximation* is all that we can expect, and perhaps all that is at present necessary in our inquiries. If the alphabet here given shall prove to be sufficiently well adapted to the purpose of denoting what may be called *fundamental* sounds of the principal Indian languages, it will not be difficult hereafter, gradually to make provision for such signs as experience may suggest, in order to designate all the delicate modifications of speech, which the nicest ear shall be able to discover in the different dialects. But *new signs* should be introduced with the greatest caution, lest we should have an alphabet, which will be too cumbrous for use in writing, and will require a multitude of new types for printing, these languages. The great danger will be (as Mr. Du Ponceau has observed to me) that every man, however little qualified, "will think himself adequate to the task of inventing new characters, and will delight to display himself in that way. These displays are used in order to conceal the want of ideas and resources." As in the use of our own language, it is much easier for every tasteless writer to invent new words according to his own caprice, in order to serve his immediate purposes, than patiently and carefully to select from our present abundant stock those appropriate terms, which have the sanction of the best usage; so, in constructing an alphabet for the Indian languages, it will be found a much shorter method, to devise new and gro-

tesque characters, than to apply with skill and discrimination those letters which are already in use either in our own or the kindred alphabets.

I once thought of adding to the proposed alphabet appropriate names for the letters ; but as this was not strictly within my original plan, and would only be necessary in the instruction of pupils, I relinquished it. The names in common use among the European nations and ourselves will answer sufficiently well, with the exception, perhaps, of such as our *G*, *H*, *W*, and *Y* ; which might be called by names, that would more immediately suggest to the learner the respective powers of those letters, than is done by their present denominations ; thus the letter *G* instead of being called *jee*, might have the name of *ghee*, which *Eliot* used to give it ;\* *H* might take the German appellation *ha* or *hau* ; *W* might be called *wee*,† as *Eliot* also named it ; and *Y* might be called *ye* or *ya*. Perhaps, too, some suitable appellations may be wanted for the compound characters *sh*, *tsh*, &c. to give the learner some idea of their powers. But, for the reasons above mentioned, it is not necessary here to enter upon the consideration of this subject.

I now subjoin in one view the proposed *Indian Alphabet*, in the following Table ; in which, the first List contains the common letters of our alphabet, as far as it seems practicable to adopt them ; the next contains the class of *nasals* ; after these follow the *diphthongs* ; and lastly, a number of *compound characters*, which will be of more or less frequent use in different dialects.

\* Indian Gram. p. 3.

† “ We call *W* (*wee*) because our name giveth no hint of the power of its sound.” Indian Gram. p. 2.

## TABLE OF THE ALPHABET.

**A** as in the English words, *far, father, &c.* (But see the *Note on the Vowels*, p. 37.)  
**B** as in English, French, &c.  
**D** (*the same.*)  
**E** as in the English word *there*; and also short *e*, as in *met, &c.*  
**F** as in English, &c.  
**G** English *g* hard, as in *game, gone, &c.*  
**H** an aspiration, as in English, &c.  
**I** as in *marine, machine*, (or English *ee*); and also short *i* in *him*.  
**K** as in English.  
**L** (*the same.*)  
**M** (*the same.*)  
**N** (*the same.*)  
**O** English long *o*, as in *robe*; and also the *o* in *some, among, above, &c.* which is equivalent to the English short *u* in *rub, tun, &c.* (But see the remarks on this letter, p. 39.)  
**P** as in English, &c.  
**R** (*the same.*)  
**S** as in English at the beginning of a word.  
**T** as in English, &c.  
**U** English *oo*, both long and short; French *eu*.  
**V** English *v*, German *w*, Russian *b*, Modern Greek *β*.  
**W** as in English; French *ou*.  
**Y** as in the English words, *yet, you, &c.*  
**Z** as in English, &c.

## NASALS.

**A** as in *ang* (sounding the *a* itself, as in *father*.) But for a better description of this and the other nasals, see the *Note on the Nasals*, p. 39.  
**E** long, as in *eyng* (pronouncing the *ey* as in *they*;) and short, as in the word *ginseng*; Portuguese *em* final. (See *Note on the Nasals*, p. 39.)  
**I** long, as in *eeng*; and short as in *ing*; Portuguese *im* final. (See *Note on the Nasals*, p. 39.)  
**O** long, as in *owng* (sounding the *ow* as in *own*;) French *on*; Portuguese *om* final. This character will also be used for *o* short *nasalised*, which is very nearly the same with *ong* in *among*, as this latter is equivalent to *ung* in *lung, &c.* See *Walker's Dict. Principles*, No. 165. See also the *Notes on the vowel O, and on the Nasals*, p. 38, 39.  
**U** as in *oong*; Portuguese *um* final.  
 To these should be added a character for the nasal *awng* or *ong* which corresponds to our *o* in *for, nor, &c.* And, as I have proposed (in p. 38,) to denote this vocal sound, when not *nasalised*, by *aw*, so it would be most strictly conformable to my plan, to denote the same vocal sound, when it is *nasalised*, by *aq* or *aw*. But perhaps the letter *a* itself, with the cedilla (q) may be used without inconvenience for this broad nasal sound, and we may still, in the common vowels, reserve the simple *a* to denote the sound it has in the word *father*, and not the sound of *aw*. For it may be found, that the first nasal sound in this Table is not common in the Indian languages; in which case it would be best to use the simple *a* for the broad nasal here mentioned.

## TABLE OF THE ALPHABET CONTINUED.

## DIPHTHONGS.

AI English *i* in *pine*.  
 AU English *ow* in *how*, *now*, &c. and *ou* in *our*.  
 IU English *u* in *pure*; French *iou*.  
 YU to be used at the beginning, as *iu* may be in the middle, of words.

## ADDITIONAL CONSONANTS.

DJ, DSH, or DZH, English *j* and *dg*, in *judge*; French *dg*.  
 DH, as in the English words, *this*, *that*; the *ð* of the Modern Greeks.  
 DS, DZ; TS, TZ, English *ts* in the proper name *Betsy*; German and Italian *z*; German *c* before the vowels *e* and *i*; Polish *c* before all the vowels; Russian *Tsi*. These four compounds being nearly alike (as Mr. Du Ponceau justly observes to me) the ear of the writer must direct him which to use, as the respective consonants predominate.  
 GH, See *kh* below.  
 Cz, or Gs, English *x* in *example*, *exact*.  
 Hw, English *wh* in *what*, *when*.  
 KH, guttural, like the Greek *z*; Spanish *x*, *g*, and *j*; German *ch*; Dutch *gh*. I have in the preceding paper given the preference to *kh* for the purpose of expressing this guttural sound; but *gh* pronounced as the Irish *do* in their name *Drogheda*, &c. may be better in certain cases where this guttural partakes more of the flat sound, *g*, than of the sharp one, *k*. It may be observed, that *gh* has been already used in some of the books printed for the use of the Indians.  
 KS, English *x* in *maxim*, *exercise*.  
 KSH, —— xi in *complexion*; xu in *luxury*. The formation of this combination would be obvious; but as the sound is actually often used in the Delaware language, I have thought it best to notice it.  
 KW English *qu*.  
 LY or LI, as in the English word *steelyard*; French *l mouillée*, Spanish *ll*, Portuguese *lh*, Italian *gl* before *i*.  
 NY or NI, as in the English proper name *Bunyan*, and the words *onion*, *opinion*, &c.  
 TH, in the English word *thin*; Greek *θ*.  
 TS } See *ds* above.  
 TZ }  
 TSH, English *ch*, in *chair*; Spanish *ch* in *much*; Italian *c* before *e* and *i*; German *tsch*; Russian *ч*.  
 WR, as in the Delaware language.  
 ZH, as *s* in *pleasure*; French and Portuguese *j*; Polish *z*, with a comma over it (*ż*).

## NOTE ON THE VOWELS.

In considering the several *letters* by which the vowel *sounds* are represented, both in our own and other languages, it will be perceived, that each of them may be taken as representing, not a single sound, but a *series* of sounds, which series will be more or less extensive according to the genius of different languages; and it will be further observed, that each series gradually runs into the adjoining series (if we may so speak) by such slight and delicate modifications, that it is a matter of no small difficulty, in many cases, to decide in what part of any one series we should drop the vowel character with which we begin, and take another to continue the sounds of the next series; in other words, it is not easy to determine, at what point one series ends and another begins. For example; if we take the letter *a*, we may assume the sound which it has in the word *father*, as the middle point of a series, the whole of which, (beginning with the broad *a* in *fall* and ending with the narrow or slender *a* in *fate*) we denote in English by this one character, thus : ~~FALL—FAR—FAT—FATE—~~

and these are all the sounds in this series, which philologists designate in our own language by this one letter. But if we extend our view to other languages, we shall find various intermediate sounds between the two extremes of this same series; for example, between the sounds of our *a* in *fall* and in *far*, we find in the *French* language, the *ä* in *pâle*, *mâle*, &c. which can only be described, on paper, as a sound between our two, and which is seldom attended to by foreigners in speaking French. Now, if we should minutely examine a number of languages, and should endeavour to arrange accurately in one progression all the vowel sounds belonging to this series, we should doubtless discover in those languages many other slight modifications intervening between the different members of our English series. As, however, we cannot accustom our ears familiarly to distinguish, nor our organs of speech to utter with precision, all these slightly differing sounds, so we need no distinctive characters to represent them to the eye, but it will be sufficient in practice to have characters for the *principal* sounds (as we may call them) in each series; just as in the prismatic series of colours, we content ourselves with a few names to denote one principal shade of each colour, without fruitlessly attempting to devise terms of theoretical nicety, to describe the innumerable shades on either side of the principal one from which we set out.

If we now recur for a moment to the series above denoted by *A*, we find on one side of it a series which we denote by the letter *O*, and on the other side, a series which we denote by the letter *E*; in the former we begin with the sound of *o* in *morn*, which might be written with *au* or *aw* (or with *a* alone, if we had been accustomed to write this word with that letter, as we do the word *war*) and then we proceed to the sound which it has in *more*, till we arrive at that which it has in *move*; which point may be considered, practically speaking, as forming the end of one series and the beginning of another, which is represented by the letter *U*; and these two contiguous extremes are sometimes represented by *o* and sometimes by *u*, that is, our *oo*. If we now take the other side of the series, represented as above by *A*, and set out from the sound which that letter has in the word *fate*, we enter upon a series, of which the letter *E* may be called the representative, beginning with its sound in the word *met*, which is the short sound of *a* in *fate*; and this series, proceeding imperceptibly through various gradations, at length vanishes in the simple unequivocal sound of *ee*, which foreign nations denote by the third vowel, *i*. The following table will perhaps make these remarks more intelligible :

Series of the letter A :	
Series of O :	FALL      FAR      FATE
	MORN
MORE	
MOVE	
RULE, &c.	
Series of E :	
	THERE
	THESE
	MARINE, &c.

Now in writing the Indian languages, it will often be found extremely difficult to decide in each series of the vowel sounds, to what extent on each side of the principal or middle point (as I have called it) we shall use the same vowel character, or when we shall have recourse to the letter which is the representative of the next adjacent series.

From these considerations in the case of the vowel *A*, though we have no difficulty in using it to denote the sound of *a* in *far*, yet when we proceed in the series to the full broad sound which it has in *fall*, we feel a repugnance (arising from old habits in our own language) to denoting that sound by the single vowel, and are rather inclined to express it by *au* or *aw*. If it should be thought that it might be denoted by *o* (as in *for*) it will be obvious, that this would only be throwing the same difficulty into another series, and we should then have to decide again, how far the letter *o* shall be employed in that series, on each side of its principal sound of *o* in *more*. Now this broad sound (*aw*) though found in the European languages, is not commonly represented in them by the letter *A*; and therefore foreigners, who should attempt to read any Indian language, in which the simple *a* was employed to denote the sound *aw*, would inevitably be misled, and pronounce the *a* in *father*. It has therefore seemed to me better, in an alphabet designed for general use, to employ *aw* to denote this broad sound, and to reserve the single letter *a* to denote its common foreign sound, as in *father*. I should use *aw* and not *au*, because the latter has already the established power of a *diphthong* in the foreign languages, equivalent to our diphthong *ow* in *now*, *how*, &c. but *aw*, being a combination not in common use, would attract the attention of the foreign reader as a new character, and would not lead him into error. Mr. Du Ponceau, after much reflection, prefers using *a* alone for the sound of *aw*, and then denoting the sound of *a* in *father* by the diphthong *ə*. His opinion much diminishes the confidence I have had in my own; but as my plan was founded upon the idea of taking the *common* European sounds of the vowels as the *basis* of the alphabet, I have thought it would be too great a departure from it, if I should give to the vowel *a* any other than such common sound.

It will be observed, that I have employed the letter *O* as the representative of two sounds; that is, the *long* sound of *o* in *robe*, *tone*, &c. and the *short* sound of *u* (as we term it in English) in *rub*, *tun*, &c.; which latter sound, as appears in the Table, we often denote in English by *o* also; as in the words *among*, *above*, &c. In conformity with this use of the simple character *o*, I have, in the Table of *Nasals*, employed the same letter also with a cedilla (*ø*) to denote both the *long* nasal *owng* (French *on*) and the *short* nasal which we hear in *among*, *hunger*, &c. Those persons, who have not had occasion to analyze the sounds of our language and to remark how often we represent the same sounds by different characters, and *vice versa*, are not aware how apt the ear is to be misled by the eye; or, in other words, how apt we are to judge of vocal sounds by the written characters which we are accustomed to employ in representing them; and such persons may, perhaps, from the force of habit, feel a little repugnance to denoting by the single letter *O*, two sounds which, in our own language, we have been used to consider as essentially different from each other and to express, in general, by the two different characters *o* and *u*. A careful comparison, however, of these two vowel sounds, under various combinations of the consonants, will show that they do not differ so materially as our various modes of representing them might lead us to suppose; but on the contrary, that their principal difference is in their length or *quantity*; while in respect to *quality*, the difference between them (to apply the language of another science) may be almost said to be less than any assignable one, and therefore they may well enough be denoted by the same letter. In addition to the proof we have of this close resemblance, from an examination of our own language, we see also very strong evidence of it in the case of *foreigners* when attempting to speak our language; for they constantly express our short *u* by *o*; as for example, in our word *but*, which they would write *bote*, and would pronounce *bote*. If, however, any person, who may

wish to "adopt the proposed Indian alphabet, should still feel a reluctance in employing the letter *o* (even with a distinctive mark as mentioned in pp. 12—15) for the purpose of denoting this short sound of *u*, I know of no method of obviating the difficulty (consistently with the plan of the alphabet) except by having recourse to a *new character*; and in that case I have thought that it might be formed from the same letter *o*, by making a small opening in the upper part of it in this manner, *O*. This character would sufficiently resemble both *o* and *u* to be easily retained in the memory, and would, moreover, occasion no embarrassment in printing the Indian languages; for those printers, who may not be provided with types expressly made for the purpose, might easily form this character out of a common type, by merely cutting out a small portion of an *o* (thus, *u*) which would answer the purpose. The only objection to this would be the general one, the inconvenience of multiplying new characters; upon which point I have made some remarks in page 33 of this Essay. For further remarks on the subject of the letter *O* see *Walker's Dictionary, Principles*, No. 67 and 165.

*The Nasals.* The description of the *Nasals*, in the preceding *Table*, by the syllables *ang*, *eeng*, &c. is to be considered merely as a rude approximation to their true sounds. Those persons who are acquainted with the French language will need no description of them; those who are not, may possibly have a more just conception of them by carefully attending to a class of English words, in which the *nasal* is followed by the consonants *g*, or *k*, or *c* hard; as in *linger*, *thinking*, *uncle*, &c. If we divide one of these words a little differently from our usual method of spelling them, the true nasal sound will become distinctly perceptible. The word *linger*, for example, is usually divided into two syllables, the sounds of which we should express separately, thus *ling-ger*; now in pronouncing the word in that manner, as soon as we arrive at the end of the first syllable, the tongue is perceived to touch the roof of the mouth, and we then distinctly hear the sound of our English *ng*: But if, instead of thus fully pronouncing the whole of the syllable, we prolong the indistinct sound which is formed the moment before the *g* is uttered, and do not allow the tongue to touch the roof of the mouth, we shall have the *short* nasal sound *i* in the Table; and if we go through the same process again, only giving the vowel *i* its long foreign sound (like our *ee*) we shall have the *long* nasal sound of the same character *i*. And in a similar manner we may form the other nasal sounds in the *Table*. For further observations on the *nasal* sounds, see *Walker's Dictionary*, under the word *Encore*, and also his *Principles*, No. 381 and 408.

In connexion with the subject of the *nasals* it will not be uninteresting to refer to a curious remark of an ancient writer upon the subject of the letter *N* before *G* or *C*, in the *Latin* language. The remark is to be found in *Aulus Gellius* (lib. xix. c. 14.) who cites it from *Nigidius*; and it shows very clearly the Roman pronunciation of the letters *ng* together, while at the same time it indicates, that the letter *c* (being pronounced like *k*) when preceded by *n* coalesces with the *n* just as *g* does; as is the case with *c* hard in many English words:—" *Inter literam N et G est alia vis; ut in nomine anguis et angaria et ancorae et increpat, et incurrit et ingenuus.* In omnibus enim his, non verum *N*, sed adulterinum ponitur; nam *N* non esse lingua indicio est; nam, si ea litera esset, lingua palatum tangeret."

#### CORRECTION.

After the 27th and 28th pages were printed, Mr. Du Ponceau expressed some doubts respecting the Russian orthography of the word *Kamtshatka*, which he gave me from recollection only; and I now find, upon inquiry of a Russian gentleman in Boston, that the name is written in that language *Камчатка*, which would be in English *Kamchatka* or *Kamishatka*.

## A P P E N D I X.

### *Account of Father Râle's MS. Indian Dictionary.*

I have thought it would not be uninteresting, and might be of some use, to give in this place a short bibliographical account of the valuable Manuscript Dictionary of the *Abnaki* language mentioned in p. 12 of the preceding paper. The author of it, Father *Sebastian Râle* (or *Rasles*, for the name is written both ways) was one of the Jesuit Missionaries, and came to New England in the year 1689. He resided with the Indians principally at a settlement called *Norridgwock* (which he calls *Munrantsouak*) on the river *Kennebeck*, upwards of thirty years, and was killed in a battle between the Indians and English in 1724. A short but interesting memoir of this able missionary was lately published by the Rev. Thaddeus M. Harris, D.D. in the *Massachusetts Historical Collections*, vol. viii. Second Series, p. 250. In the same volume will be found copies of some of his letters, with other papers respecting him, which I transcribed from the originals deposited in the archives of *Massachusetts*; among them is a very spirited manifesto, in *French*, from various tribes of Eastern Indians against the Provincial Government of *Massachusetts*, probably written by *Râle* himself. Other letters of his, and an account of his death, will be found in that valuable work, well known among the learned, under the title of *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses* (published in 26 volumes, 12mo.) which contains Letters or Reports of the Jesuit Missionaries in various parts of the world: See vol. vi. p. 127.

The MS. is a quarto volume and in the hand-writing of *Râle* himself. On the first leaf is the following note:

“1691. Il y a un an que je suis parmi les sauvages, je commence a mettre en ordre en forme de dictionnaire les mots que j'apprena.” Immediately below this there is, in an old hand-writing, the following:

“ Taken after the fight at Norridgwock among Father Ralle’s Papers, and given by the late Col. Heath to Elisha Cooke, Esq.

Dictionary of the Norridgewalk Language.”

The volume consists of two parts, the *first* of which is a *general Dictionary* of the language in French and Indian. This part consists of 205 leaves (as they are numbered) about one quarter part of which have writing upon both sides, and the remainder, upon one side only. The pages are divided, though not with regularity throughout, into two columns ; the first of French, and the second of Indian, containing each about twenty five lines. The *second part* of the volume consists of twenty five leaves, almost all written upon both sides, and has this Latin title—“ *Particulars.*” In this part the *Indian* words are placed first, and the author gives an account of the *particles*, making his explanations sometimes in French and sometimes in Latin.

From a comparison which I have made of several words of the language now spoken by the *Penobscot* Indians (as we call them) who, at the present time, occupy a small territory on the river Penobscot, it appears to be, as we should naturally expect, exactly the same with that of *Ralle’s* Dictionary. A few years ago one page of this Dictionary, containing the Indian numerals, was published in our *Massachusetts Historical Collections*, vol. x. p. 137 ; but a very natural mistake, either of the printer or of the transcriber, runs through this extract, in constantly printing *aü* instead of *an*. This error probably arose from the uncommon use of the diæresis, which is here put over a consonant (N) instead of a vowel as is the practice in other languages. *Ralle* seems to have used the diæresis thus, in order to point out when the letters *an* were not to have the nasal sound which they had in the French language.

So copious a dictionary, compiled a century ago by a man of acknowledged abilities and learning, and who had resided more than thirty years among the Indians, is one of the most important documents now existing, relative to the history of the North American languages ; and measures ought to be taken without loss of time, either under the direction of the University or of the American Academy, to effect the publication of it, before any accident happens to the manuscript. The Legislature of our own State would, without doubt, be fully sensible of the importance of publishing it, and would lend its aid in making provision for the expense of printing in a manner becoming the Government, a work which

the public has a peculiar right to expect from the State of Massachusetts. Our brethren in Pennsylvania have recently distinguished themselves by their valuable publications relative to the Indians, which I have mentioned in the preceding paper, and which may be said to form an era in our *American Researches*. It is to be hoped that our own State, which may justly claim the merit of having already preserved many invaluable materials for American history, will not be willing to let pass an opportunity, like the present, of adding to its reputation abroad by publishing the work in question; for we may be assured, that nothing would reflect more honour upon the country, and nothing relative to this continent would be more acceptable to Europeans, particularly the German literati, than the publication of such an original document.

#### POSTSCRIPT.

Page 4. "The first fruits of these inquiries," &c.

I have unintentionally overlooked the useful work of the late Dr. *Barton*, entitled "New Views of the Indian Tribes," &c. of which two editions have been already published, and which it was the author's intention to have rendered still more valuable by an entire revision of it.

AN  
ESSAY  
ON  
THE PRONUNCIATION  
OF THE  
GREEK LANGUAGE.

AS PUBLISHED IN THE MEMOIRS OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
ARTS AND SCIENCES.

—  
BY JOHN PICKERING.  
—

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CAMBRIDGE:

PRINTED BY HILLIARD AND METCALF.

1818.



*On the Pronunciation of the Greek Language.*

By JOHN PICKERING, A. A. S.

THE arrival of a Greek ship, called *The Jerusalem*, at Boston in the year 1814, afforded me an opportunity, which I had long desired, of making some inquiries respecting the language of the *Modern Greeks*, and of comparing it in some particulars with the unrivalled idiom of their ancestors ;—a people, whose authors are still our models in writing, as their architects and sculptors are in the arts. In the course of my inquiries, many things presented themselves to notice, which highly excited my own curiosity, as well as that of some of my friends, and gave a new interest to the recollections arising from the study of the *ancient Greek* authors in our youth ; and, as opportunities of conversing with *Modern Greeks* are extremely rare in our country, (this being the only instance of the arrival of a Greek ship in this part of America,) I have thought it would not be uninteresting to the members of the Academy to be possessed of such of the observations I made, as seemed to be most worthy of attention.

I ought here to state, that my information respecting the *Modern Greek* language and my instruction in the pronunciation of it, are chiefly derived from the supercargo of the ship, Mr. *Nicholas Ciclitira* (or, as he writes it in his native dialect, *Νικόλαος τζικλιτίρα*).

*τίγρας*\*) who has lately visited this country again, and now resides in Boston. He is a native of *Navarinos* (anciently *Pylus*) on the western coast of the Peloponnesus, and is an intelligent, well-informed man; but he has told me with much frankness and modesty, and at the same time with regret, that he had not enjoyed the advantages of a learned education; and that the education he had received (which was the common one of his country) had been of the less service to him, as he had been engaged in mercantile business all his life, and had thus been compelled to withdraw his attention from literary pursuits. He had, however, in his youth studied *Homer* and some other ancient authors, as is common in Greece at this day; but, from the circumstances above mentioned, he had in a great measure lost the knowledge which he had acquired of ancient Greek at school, and retained but little more of it than had been preserved by the daily use of his native language, the *Modern Greek*. In addition to the information thus derived, I had also frequent conversations with the master of the ship, Captain *Lazarus Nicholas Katára*, (λάζαρος νικόλαος κατάρα, as he used to write it himself, who likewise spoke *Italian*,) and I frequently heard him read, particularly in the *Greek Testament*, which he appeared, in general, to comprehend without difficulty. He was a native of *Hydra*; (the ancient *Aristera*,) an island on the southeasterly side of the Peloponnesus, and celebrated for its seamen and nautical enterprize. He

\* In writing his name in *Roman* letters, *Ciclitira*, he gives the letters the powers which they have in *Italian* (*Cheekleteerah*) which he speaks fluently, as is common throughout the Levant; but in *English* we might write it, in strict conformity with the Greek orthography, *Tzikliteera*, only pronouncing the *i* as in our word *magazine*. Every reader will recollect a similar combination of *Tz* in the name of John *Tzelzes*.

had been a seaman from the age of nine years ; and, as he informed me, had never been at school since that early age ; the effects of which deficiency in education were apparent in his reading and writing. This circumstance however (as has been justly observed in a similar case by an intelligent writer on this subject\*) obviously gave his testimony the greater weight in relation to the *common language* of his country ; because, as he could not be aware of the controversies among the learned in Europe on the subject of the *ancient and modern Greek*, it was not in his power to frame his answers to my questions in such a manner as to suit any particular hypothesis of European scholars.

I may here remark, that I have felt the greater desire to communicate to the Academy the information thus obtained respecting the *pronunciation* of the *Modern Greeks*, because it led to a strong conviction in my own mind very different from the opinion I once entertained of it. Adopting the opinion, which was first propagated with success by *Erasmus*, (who, however, did not adhere to it himself in practice,) I had long supposed their present pronunciation to be grossly corrupt, and wholly different from that of their ancestors. But the attention I have given to the subject, in consequence of my frequent conversations with the two Greeks I have mentioned, and an examination of the controversy, which took place in the age of *Erasmus*, (which will be more particularly noticed hereafter,) have occasioned a change in my opinion. It now appears to me highly probable, nay almost certain, that the Greeks of the present day pronounce very nearly as their ancestors did, as early as the commencement of the Christian era,

\* *Observations upon the Greek Accents*, by Arthur Brown, Esq. published in the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. vii. p. 359.

or at least just after that period. As this opinion, however, is contrary to that which has prevailed among our countrymen, and probably among most members of the society I am now addressing, I have thought it proper to exhibit, as concisely as possible, some of the principal arguments upon which it is founded. In doing this, I shall make no pretensions to new or original remarks; but shall only attempt to select such facts and observations of the writers on this subject, as appear to be the most important in a general view of the question; and such as may, I hope, incite some persons of more leisure and ability than myself, to prosecute this interesting inquiry.

Here, perhaps, the old and often recurring question may be asked, (not however by scholars,) of *what use would it be, even if practicable, to ascertain the true pronunciation of the Greek Language?* With every lover of learning it would be a sufficient answer to say, that the fact itself, like any other thus ascertained, would gratify a liberal curiosity, by settling a long contested point in the literature of one of the most interesting nations of antiquity. It may be added, however, that it would afford us the substantial advantage of putting within our power the means of tracing the etymologies of modern languages through the *oral* as well as *written* part of this admirable tongue, the influence of which has been felt among so many nations. It would also give a new interest to the study of Greek; for every man, who has attempted to acquire a language, feels with how much greater satisfaction he pursues the study of it, when he knows how to *pronounce* it, than when he is obliged, like the unfortunate deaf and dumb, to study merely its *written characters*. In truth, with all nations, except the singular people of China, the whole power of

a language is believed to be in the *oral* part of it, or the pronunciation;\* and a scholar hardly feels satisfied, that he knows a language, till he has learned its pronunciation. But to all speculations on this point it is an answer, the force of which every scholar will feel, that could we but bring before our eyes the orator of Greece, and hear with our own ears the accents of that tongue, which swayed the destinies of his country, we should not stop to inquire, of what use it would be to know the pronunciation of the language which fell from it.

It may, perhaps, be thought that we cannot at this day satisfactorily ascertain the ancient pronunciation of Greek. It must undoubtedly be admitted, that we cannot arrive at all the delicate distinctions of accent, (as it is commonly called,) which few but *natives* ever acquire, even with the aid of a living instructor;—distinctions, which change from one age to another in all nations. Such alterations have probably taken place in the successive periods of the *Greek* language. But, that the *general pronunciation*

\* “The Chinese (says Mr. Duponceau) consider the mode of conveying ideas to the mind through the eye, by means of written signs, as far superior to spoken words which communicate perceptions through the ear. ‘The people of *Fan*, say they, (meaning the Europeans,) prefer sounds, and what they obtain enters by the ear; the Chinese prefer beautiful characters, and what they obtain enters by the eye.’ ‘It is, indeed, says Remusat, impossible to express in any language, the energy of those picturesque characters, which exhibit to the eye, instead of barren and arbitrary sounds, the objects themselves, figured and represented by their most characteristic traits, so that it would require several phrases to express the signification of a single word.’” See the *learned and philosophical Memoir on English Phonology*, published in the *Transactions of the Philosophical Society at Philadelphia*, by Mr. Duponceau; who cites, for the first of these quotations, *Morrison’s Chinese Dict. Introd.* p. vii.; and, for the other, Remusat, p. 56.

of this language has undergone any essential change in the course of eighteen centuries, I cannot believe to be the fact. On the contrary, I think it can be very satisfactorily shown, that little alteration has taken place even in that length of time. By adopting, therefore, the pronunciation of the present day, we can, as mathematicians express it, approximate very nearly to that of ancient times. How far preferable this would be to our barbarous custom of pronouncing Greek just as we do our own language, I need not stop to remark. This custom, indeed, our English brethren, as well as ourselves, justify by the example of the European nations in general, who have adopted a similar practice. But this justification rests upon a palpable fallacy; for, defensible as the rule may be in the case of other nations, it is not applicable to those who speak the *English* language. The pronunciation of the *English* letters, particularly of the vowels, is essentially different from that of the other European languages; the principal sounds of which are undoubtedly much the same with those of the Latin and Greek. The same rule, therefore, which may be a very good one for the nations of the *continent of Europe*, will be a very fallacious one for Englishmen.

In the case of another ancient language, I mean the Hebrew, we are very well satisfied with making such an approximation; (for that we do no more than approximate in this instance will not be contested,) and, by means of the Masoretic points, we have among the learned of all nations a uniform pronunciation of Hebrew, which may be traced back to a very ancient date. This pronunciation, it is true, was for a time discountenanced by Mas-clef and his followers, who attempted to introduce what was thought to be an improved method; and the innovation was fa-

avourably received in our mother country, as well as by ourselves, and at one period was even taught at our University. But our scholars are now again following the general practice of the learned in Europe; and they would feel as much ashamed to be ignorant of the pronunciation, as they would of the letters themselves.

Now our means of ascertaining the pronunciation of *Greek*, are not less ample than in the case of the Hebrew language; nay, they are probably more so; for *Hebrew* is admitted by all to be a *dead language*; but *Greek*, though commonly called such, can hardly with strict propriety be ranked in that class; because, though the *form* of it is somewhat changed, or, as we are accustomed to say, corrupted, yet the *body and substance* of it, (I mean among the people of education,) and therefore probably the *pronunciation* too, have been transmitted from one age to another down to our own times, by the same unmixed race of people, who have always spoken it, and as the *same language*. Certain it is, that the pronunciation has undergone no perceptible change since the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, (nearly four hundred yea<sup>s</sup> ago,) from which period it may be traced back to the eleventh century with a very high degree of certainty; and many facts conspire to show, that no material change had taken place for the seven or eight preceding centuries.

At the period of the taking of Constantinople, the learned and accomplished Greeks, who are well known by the honourable appellation of the *Restorers of Learning*, and who were compelled to seek refuge in *Europe* from the oppression of their Turkish masters, taught their native language with their *native pronunciation*; and their European disciples at that time would no soon-

er have called in question the correctness of it, than they would have done that of a Frenchman, or a German, who should have instructed them in either of their languages. We find accordingly, that Erasmus himself, but a short time before he ventured to condemn the pronunciation of the day, when desirous of obtaining a professor of Greek for the University of Louvain, wrote to *John Lascaris* at Constantinople for a *native Greek* to fill that office. In his letter to Lascaris, after mentioning the establishment of the College, which was founded at Louvain by the munificence of *Busleyden*, and informing him, that the *Hebrew* and *Latin* professorships were already filled, he adds—"Many persons here are seeking for the *Greek* professorship. But my opinion has always been, that we should send for a *native Greek*, from whom the students might at once acquire the *genuine pronunciation* of the *Greek Language*; and this opinion is acceded to by all, who have the management of this business. They have accordingly directed me, on their behalf, to send for such a man as I should think qualified for the office. Relying, therefore, on your obliging disposition towards me, and on your regard for the cause of learning, I beg of you, if you know of any person, who in your opinion will do honour to us both, that you would direct him to hasten to this place immediately."\*

\* It will not be uninteresting to the friends of literature, to see the whole of this letter; which records, at the same time, the fact I have mentioned, and an illustrious example of liberality in the cause of learning; and, as the collection of *Erasmus' Letters* is not common in this country, I shall here insert it at large:

"*Joanni Lascari Constantinopolitano Erasmus Roterodamus S. D.* Vir omnibus ornamentis clarissime, *Hieronymus Buslidius*, homo doctus ac potens, et hujus regni decus incomparabile, in itinere Hispanico moriens, legavit multa milia ducatorum ad institutionem novi Collegii apud Lovanium Academiam hac

The truth is, that *Greek* was not then considered as a *dead language*; nor had it, among the people of education, departed much from the standard of the first periods of the Christian era.\* Indeed, if we may take literally the glowing description given by *Philephus*, a learned Italian, who was naturalized at Constantinople about thirty years before the Turkish conquest, the Greek language at that period was not only *spoken* but *written* in all its

ætate cum primis florentem, in quo publicitùs et *gratis* tradantur tres linguae, *Hebraica*, *Græca*, *Latina*, salario satis magnifico circiter septuaginta ducatorum, quod tamen augeri possit pro ratione personæ. *Hebraeus* jam adest, et item *Latinus*. *Græcam* professionem complures ambiunt. *Verum meum consilium semper fuit, ut ascioceretur Græcus natus, unde statim germanam Græci sermonis pronunciationem imbibant auditores*. Ac meæ sententiae subscrubunt autores hujus negotii omnes, mihique mandarunt, ut suis verbis accerserem, quem judicassem ad hoc negotii idoneum. Quare te rogo, vel pro solita tua erga nos humanitate, vel pro tuo erga bonas literas favore, siquem nōsti, quem existimes et mihi et tibi futurum honori, cura ut quamprimum huc advolet. Dabitur viaticum, dabitur salarium, dabitur locus. Erit illi res cum viris integerrimis et humanissimis. Neque minus fidat his meis literis, quām si centum diplomaticis res esset transacta. Inter bonos et absque syngraphis bene agitur. Tu cura ut deligas idoneum, ego curabo ne hominem huc venisse poeniteat. Bene vale, doctissime clarissimeque vir. *Lovani*, postridie divi Marci, Anno M.D.XVIII.”

(*Erasmi Epist. 181. fol. Lond. 1642.*)

\* “As early as the sixth century, (says *Harris*, the author of *Hermes*,) or the seventh at farthest, *Latin* ceased to be the common language of Rome, whereas *Greek* was spoken with competent purity in Constantinople, even to the fifteenth century, when that city was taken by the Turks.” *Harris’ Philological Inquiries, part ii. ch. 2.* Dr. *Gillies* also remarks—“The Greek was spoken in the middle of the fifteenth century, when Constantinople was taken by the Turks; so that from the time of Homer, it subsisted with little variation as a *living tongue* for two thousand four hundred years.”—*Gillies’ Hist. of Greece*, vol. iv. p. 398. Note 59.

ancient purity and elegance. "The *vulgar speech* (says Philelphus) has been depraved and infected by the multitude of strangers and merchants, who every day flock to the city and mingle with the inhabitants. It is from the disciples of such a school, that the Latin language received the versions of Aristotle and Plato; so obscure in sense, and in spirit so poor. But the Greeks, who have escaped the contagion, are those whom we follow; and they alone are worthy of our imitation. In familiar discourse, they still speak the tongue of Aristophanes and Euripides, of the historians and philosophers of Athens; and the style of their writings is still more elaborate and correct. The persons, who, by their birth and offices, are attached to the Byzantine Court, are those who maintain, with the least alloy, the ancient standard of elegance and purity; and the native graces of language most conspicuously shine among the noble matrons, who are excluded from all intercourse with foreigners. With foreigners, do I say? They live retired and sequestered from the eyes of their fellow citizens. Seldom are they seen in the streets; and when they leave their houses, it is in the dusk of the evening, on visits to the churches and their nearest kindred. On these occasions they are on horseback, covered with a veil, and encompassed by their parents, their husbands, or their servants."\*

The pronunciation, which the Greek exiles thus introduced among the learned of Europe was, as I have remarked, the *native pronunciation* of that age. It should also be remembered, that

\* See Hody's learned work *De Græcis Illustribus Linguae Græcae Literarumque Humaniorum Instauratoribus*, p. 188, for the original of this interesting letter. I have adopted the spirited translation which is to be found in Gibbon's *History*.

it was taught, not by mere illiterate adventurers—not by a class of men, whom Sir *Thomas Smith* contemptuously styles “*nescio qui semi-Turcici et obscuri Græci*”\*—nor (as Sir *John Cheke* insinuates, with a degree of credulity and illiberality unworthy of a scholar) by a confederacy of impostors, who had conspired to obscure their language, in order to render it difficult to foreigners, and thus make it the source of greater profit to the teachers of it; a confederacy, which would have been as ridiculously impracticable, as a similar one would be among the teachers of a living language at the present day.† No; it was thus taught by the polite and well-educated nobles and the learned professors of Constantinople; who, being unable to rescue any thing from the wreck of their fortunes, were, like the unhappy exiles of a polite and learned nation in our own times, compelled to resort to the occupation of teaching their language, in order to gain a subsistence; and this pronunciation was then received by the learned throughout Europe, as genuine, and so it continued until the period I am now about to mention.

In the sixteenth century a *new* or *reformed* pronunciation, as it was called, was promulgated by *Erasmus*, and countenanced by some other learned men, and at length received in various parts of Europe. This *new* pronunciation, it was contended, ap-

\* *De Recta et Emendata Linguae Græcae pronunciatione*; written in 1542, and republished by *Havercamp* in his *Sylloge Scriptorum qui de Ling. Græc. vera et recta pronunciatione Commentarios reliquerunt*, tom. 2. p. 552, *Lugd. Bat.* 1740.

† *Cheke*, *De Pronuntiatione Græcae potissimum Lingue Disputationes cum Stephano Vintonensi Episcopo*; written between 1542 and 1555, and republished by *Havercamp* in his *Sylloge Scriptorum* above cited, tom. ii. p. 235.

proached nearer than the prevailing one to that of the *ancient Greeks*; and, as it was more conformable to the general pronunciation of the *modern languages* of Europe, and consequently was less difficult to acquire, it soon obtained currency among the learned. This change of pronunciation, if it were not supported by the authority of great names, to a person at all conversant with the powers of the organs of speech, and acquainted with the writings of the Greek grammarians and scholiasts which have come down to us, would appear to have been made upon very insufficient data, and without that comprehensive view of language, which has been taken by the scholars of our own times; who, though not possessing more ability than their illustrious predecessors, yet have the benefit of their labours and many advantages besides, which were not then within the reach of scholars. The manner, in which this change is said to have been introduced, I shall presently relate at large. But it will first be necessary to give a general view of the pronunciation of the *Modern Greeks*, which has been the occasion of so much controversy among European scholars.

The pronunciation of the *modern Greeks* has been supposed to differ from that of their ancestors, both in the *sounds of the letters*, and in being regulated wholly by the *accents*, without regard to what is called *quantity*. The *accents* will be the subject of consideration hereafter; at present I shall confine my remarks to the *sounds of the letters*. In doing this, I shall first present a *general view* of the pronunciation, (which will be found in the following table,) and then give a more particular account of the several letters, when taken single or in combination; and I shall subjoin to each a concise statement of the arguments in favour of the *old*, and of the *new*, or *Erasmic*, pronunciation.

The *Alphabet* is pronounced by the *Modern Greeks* as follows :—

Names of the letters.	Powers of the letters.
α álphah	a, in our word <i>far</i> ; commonly called the <i>Italian</i> sound of a.
β véetah	v.
γ gámmah	g. Before α, ε, ο, the γ sounds as our g does before the corresponding English vowels; which is usually called the <i>hard</i> sound of g. But before ι and υ, and the diphthongs having their sound, it is pronounced like our y; for example, γίγας would be pronounced yá-ras; and γίγημα, yé-nomay. Before another γ, or ζ, ξ, ζ, it takes the sound of n.
δ dhéltah	dh, or (as <i>Walker</i> calls it in English) the <i>flat</i> sound of th, as in our word <i>this</i> . The power of the δ may be conveniently represented by dh, in order to distinguish it from that of θ, which has the <i>sharp</i> sound of th, as in <i>thin</i> .
ε épsilon	e, in <i>met</i> , <i>nearly</i> , or in <i>there</i> .
ζ zéetah	z.
η eetah	ee; or like e in the word <i>me</i> ; but, for distinction's sake, it may be represented by ee.
θ théetah	th, in <i>thin</i> . See the remark above on the letter δ.
ι yótah	i in <i>machine</i> , <i>marine</i> , &c.
κ káppah	k; but before the vowels ε and ο, and the diphthongs having the same sound with those vowels, it partakes of what <i>Walker</i> calls in English, the “softened” sound of the gutturals, as if it were followed by the letter y. Thus και is pronounced 'kyá; δίκαιος, dhée-kyáos.
λ lámythah (the th being sounded as in the word <i>this</i> .)	l. Before α, ε, ο, ο, it has the common English sound of l; but before ι, and υ, and the diphthongs which are pronounced like ae, it has the liquid sound of gl in <i>seraglio</i> , which may be represented by 'ly; as in λμδε, and λδμδε, both pronounced 'lyemos.*
μ mee	m.
ν 'nyee	n, before α, ε, ο, ο; but before ι, υ, η, &c. it has the sound of gn in the foreign words <i>seignior</i> , <i>bagnio</i> , &c.; which may be denoted by 'ny.†

\* I do not find this distinction in the sound of λ (depending on the vowel which follows it) noticed by any of the old writers or the modern travellers: But Mr. *Ciclistira* assures me, it is universally observed in Greece. The *Captain* of *The Jerusalem* also uniformly observed it in reading to me.

† This distinction in the sound of ν appears to be equally unnoticed, by writers and travellers, with that of the λ; but Mr. C. assures me it also is universal; and the Captain likewise uniformly observed it.

Names of the letters.	Powers of the letters.
ξ ksee	ξ, (or ks) as in <i>exercise</i> ; but never like <i>gz</i> , as in the word <i>example</i> , &c.
ο ómicron	ο in <i>not</i> , <i>for</i> , &c.
π pee	π. When preceded by μ, it partakes of the sound of <i>b</i> ; thus Ζμπεηος is pronounced nearly as if written <i>ámbelos</i> .
ρ rho	ρ.
σ seegmah	σ. This should always have the pure sound of <i>s</i> , and never that of <i>z</i> .
τ tahf	τ.
υ ypsilon (pronounced épsilon)	υ, as in the final syllables in English; for example, in <i>likely</i> , <i>lovely</i> , &c.
φ phee	φ.
χ khee	χ, guttural; like the German <i>ch</i> final, or nearly like the Spanish guttural sound of <i>x</i> , &c.
ψ psee	ψ. It should be remarked, that the sound of the <i>p</i> in this letter is always preserved, both at the beginning and the end of syllables.
ω oméggah	ω; like the <i>omicron</i> .

The *diphthongs* are pronounced in the following manner:

αι	like	ai in <i>pain</i> ; or like <i>epsilon</i> .
ει	like	ei in <i>receive</i> , or long <i>e</i> .
οι	like	oe in <i>oeconomy</i> , or long <i>e</i> .
υι	like	ui in <i>guilt</i> , or more exactly like long <i>e</i> .
ου	like	ou in <i>you</i> ; or oo.
αυ	like	af or av, according to the nature of the consonant which follows it. For example; if a <i>sharp</i> consonant, (as Walker denominates them in English) that is, π, ς, τ, &c. follows, then this diphthong is pronounced <i>af</i> ; but if a <i>flat</i> consonant, as ζ, γ, δ, &c. follows, then it is pronounced <i>av</i> .
ευ	like	ef or ev, as in the case of <i>αυ</i> .
ηυ	like	eev.
ωυ	like	ove or ofe.

It is only necessary to add in this place a few combinations of consonants. The principal ones are the following:

γγ, pronounced like *ng*. Thus, Ζγγιλας is pronounced *áng-gyelos*.

γν, like *ng*. Thus, Σγνίφαλος is pronounced *engéphalos*.

μπ, at the beginning of words, like *b*; thus, the name of *Boston* would be written *Mποστον*. But this is chiefly used in foreign names.

ντ, at the beginning of words, like *d*: Thus *Dover* would be written *Nτόβερ*. In middle syllables, ντ generally sound like *nd*; but there are some exceptions.

This is the *general pronunciation* of the Modern Greeks, as it is described by travellers, and as I learned it from the Greeks I have mentioned. The niceties, which distinguish the people of different provinces from each other, need not be regarded by foreigners. The purest Greek, it is admitted by all writers, is that which is spoken by people of the first class in Constantinople; and this is confirmed to me by Mr. Ciclitira, who has spent much of his life in that capital. I need not stop to remark, that *ancient Greek* (which has been used in their Church-Service from the first ages of Christianity to the present day) is pronounced by them in the same manner as the *modern*.

From this general view of the pronunciation it will be perceived, that many of the vowels and diphthongs are pronounced exactly alike; and hence superficial observers will be ready to ask, as was done in the days of Erasmus, how it is possible to distinguish these different letters, and thus determine what words are made use of by any one, that should address us with this kind of pronunciation. Instead of giving an answer of my own, I shall give that of a native Greek to the same question, proposed to him by a well known English scholar two centuries ago, as it is related in the following anecdote; which, as it is to be found only in a work not very common in this country, I will give at large. The anecdote is to be met with in the *Observations* subjoined to the edition of the *Poetæ Minores Græci*, published by Ralph Winterton, the well known professor in the University of Cambridge. After making some observations upon the corruptions of Greek Manuscripts, (occasioned by the confounding of letters which had the same sounds,) Winterton says—

“This brings to my mind a certain Greek, with whom I conversed soon after I came to the University. Upon my first meeting him, he put my ears to the torture by a pronunciation altogether unheard of by me till that time; for, when I asked him something, which I do not now recollect, he replied, like a person that did not understand what I had said, by asking—*τί μι λέγεις κίρις*. I was equally at a loss to know what he said, and I requested him to write it down, which he did with perfect correctness as to orthography, thus—*τί μοι λέγεις, κύρις*. I praised his *orthography*, but censured his *pronunciation*. He, on the other hand, condemned *my pronunciation* as coarse and rustic; for I pronounced according to our custom, *Ty moi legeis, kurie*; which, as soon as he had heard, he could not refrain from laughing, and said to me—*προφέρεις ἀγρίκας πᾶς*, that is, you pronounce in a rustic manner: “*Ακυστον, κίρις*” *δι' ὅτα προφέρειν, ἀστίας πᾶς*, (I write as he pronounced) Hear me, Sir, you ought to *pronounce* as the people in cities (or polite people) do; thus, *τί μι λέγεις, κίρις, ἄλλως δε γράφειν*, but you must *write* differently, thus, *τί μοι λέγεις, κύρις*. I then proceeded to request him to write down the pronunciation of the vowels and diphthongs, which he did after this manner—

Δεῖ προφέρειν τὸ  $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \eta \\ \upsilon \\ \epsiloni \\ \omegai \end{array} \right\}$  ὡς ε, οἵον τη̄  $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \tau\eta \\ \tau\upsilon \\ \tau\epsiloni \\ \tau\omegai \end{array} \right\}$  τε.

By this method I began to comprehend him with ease, when he pronounced according to his manner. I continued thus: Πᾶς οὖν διαφίει ταῦτα ἀλλήλων, ἡμεῖς καὶ ὑμεῖς; ή πῶς διαγνοίη

τις ἄν, οὐ δεῖ ὁμοίως προφέρειν, ιμῖς, ιμῖς; How then do these words ημῖς and ουμῖς differ from each other, or how could any person distinguish them, if we must pronounce them both ιμῖς, ιμῖς? He replied—διὰ τῆς συντάξεως, *Thia tis sintaxeos, ιμῖς λέγομεν, ιμῖς λέγεται*,—by the syntax, or construction of the sentence.” This satisfactory answer, which was just such as Winterton himself would have given to the Greek, if he had asked a similar question about the *English* language, put an end to the dialogue. A more satisfactory one, indeed, could not have been given; and, if we were not in the habit of overlooking what is immediately before our eyes, it would appear surprising, that such an objection should ever have been made to this pronunciation; and by Englishmen too, whose language has a large share of what foreigners consider as absurdities arising from this very cause. With how much force could this Greek, if he had been acquainted with our language, have retorted the question, by saying—In *English* you have as many different letters to denote *similar sounds*, as we have in Greek; and how do you distinguish words which have the *same sound* but *different meanings* in *English*? For example; this very sound of *e* long, you express in a greater number of ways than we do in Greek;—

by æ, as in *Cæsar*, &c.

e, as in *scene*, *mete*, &c.

ee, as in *see*, *sees*, *seen*, *meet*.

ea, as in *sea*, *seas*, *meat*, *mean*.

ei, as in *seize*, *deceit*, *conceive*.

ie, as in *belief*, *chief*, *mien*.

i, as in *marine*, *fatigue*, *invalid*, &c.

To say nothing of the few words in which *eo*, *oe*, *eg* and *ua* have

this same sound. And if we take into view the *unaccented* syllables of English words, we find, that the whole list of vowels *a, e, i, o, u, y*, and some of the diphthongs are, in a great part of your language pronounced exactly alike!\*

Such would have been the reasoning of this Greek in respect to the *English* language: And if we ourselves turn our attention for a moment to any foreign language, the *French*, for example, where innumerable words and phrases of different significations have precisely the same sound, and, though different to the eye are the same to the ear, we shall be much more forcibly struck with the futility of this objection. How absurd does it appear to us, for instance, that *ê, aî, oîs ait, oîs aient* and *oient* in that language should all have the same sound, that of the letter *a* in English. How, again we may ask (as Winterton did the Greek) could any one distinguish in French between the *third person singular* and the *third person plural* of nearly all the verbs in the language, (except those which begin with a vowel or *h* mute, or which are followed by words that begin with those letters,) which are so frequently recurring in speaking the language? To descend to particulars; how could any one determine when a Frenchman means to say, *he* should be, (*il seroit*,) or *they* should be, (*ils seroient*,) *he* speaks, (*il parle*,) or *they* speak, (*ils parlent*,) *he* was speaking, (*il parloit*,) or *they* were speaking, (*ils parloient*,) &c. with innumerable other expressions, which occur in every French sentence he utters? The answer is obvious; *by the construction*, as the Greek observed to Winterton; or in other words,

\* I have been the better enabled to collect these various combinations of letters in our own language, by the aid of the *Mémoire* of Mr. Duponceau, on *English Phonology*, before cited.

by use and familiarity with the language. Need it be remarked, that *Frenchmen* understand each other, and that the *Modern Greeks* do the same, notwithstanding these ambiguities, just as well as we do each other in our language? And can there be a doubt, that the Greeks of *ancient* times must have understood each other with just the same ease, that their descendants do, let their pronunciation have been as irregular, as the human mind can imagine it to have been? But, to return to the controversy alluded to.

Such, as I have above observed, was the pronunciation of Greek universally adopted in Europe, until the age of Erasmus; when that illustrious scholar promulgated a new or "reformed" pronunciation, which was afterwards called by his name. The occasion of his introducing this *reform*, as it was called, is certainly one of the most singular occurrences in the history of literature; but, singular as it may appear, it rests upon testimony hitherto unimpeached; and the biographers of Erasmus, as well as other writers, who mention the fact, do not attempt directly to controvert it. The anecdote seems to have been first published by *Gerard Vossius*; but I shall here give it (in a translation) with the accompanying remarks of *John Rodolph Wetstein*, and *John Michael Langius*; the latter of whom published it in his *Exercitationes Philologicæ de differentia Linguae Græcorum Veteris et Novæ sive Barbaro-Græcæ*. This same account was afterwards republished by Havercamp, by way of preface to his edition of the concise but satisfactory treatise of *Erasmus Schmidt* on the pronunciation of the Greek Language.\*

\* Havercamp, *Sylloge Scriptorum &c.* tom. ii. p. 626.

"We distinguish (says Langius) the pronunciation of Greek as the *Reuchlinian* or ancient, and the *Erasmic* or new; which latter is mostly used in our schools at the present day. The former takes its name from *John Reuchlin* of Phorca, (who died in 1521,)\* because that very learned man was the first among the Germans, who was so much distinguished for his knowledge of Greek, that *Argyropylus*, a native Greek, upon hearing him speak the language, exclaimed, *that Greece had taken her flight across the Alps*; and it was from *Reuchlin* that the Greek scholars of this country [Germany] received their first pronunciation of the language; which was similar to that of the *Modern Greeks*. *Erasmus*, however, in consequence of an amusing incident, introduced that new-fangled pronunciation (unknown to the natives of Greece) which is now adopted in our schools, and is called, from its author, the *Erasmic* pronunciation. People now began, contrary to the custom of the ancients, to pronounce the letter  $\beta$  as *B* in the Latin language is commonly sounded; the letter  $\eta$ , they made equivalent to *E* long; the diphthongs *ai*, *ii*, *oi*, they twisted in an execrable manner, and with a harsh sound almost into two distinct vowels; with many other conceits of the kind. But I will relate the whole story in the words of the celebrated *John Rodolph Wetstein*, as it is to be found in his *Orationes Apologeticæ pro Græca et Genuina linguae Græcae pronuntiatione*, p. 119. 'Let us see, says he, what opinion we ought to entertain of this new Pandora; and whether she received all her endowments and attractions from the Gods, or whether in truth

\* *Reuchlin's* name in German signifies *smoke*; and, according to the fashion of the day, it was *Latinized* into *Capnio*; by which he is more commonly mentioned in the works of that period.

she has not in some measure imposed upon her suitors by counterfeit charms. The garb, indeed, in which she is introduced to us, and by great names too, has the exterior of *antiquity*; but if we accurately examine this personage, we shall discover that she is of *modern* origin, and was introduced into the world by a signal fraud. Her parent was that phoenix of literature, the great Erasmus; who, in his *Dialogue on Pronunciation*, was the first person that dared to decide, how far the several letters had departed from their ancient sounds, and to point out by what means we might get back to the ancient purity. But that sage would never have gone such lengths as he did, had he not been led into a snare (and who, that is not more than human, is proof against such things?) by a trick of his friends; as will be seen in the following narrative, which you shall have in the words of the illustrious Vossius, who gives it upon the authority of *Henry Coracopetræus*.\* ‘I heard *M. Rutgerus Reschius*, (says he,) who was professor of Greek in the *Busleiden* college and my revered preceptor, relate, that he was in the Liliensian seminary at the same time with Erasmus, who occupied an upper room and himself a lower one; that *Henry Glareanus* happened to arrive at Louvain from Paris and was invited to dine in the college; and when Glareanus was asked, what news he brought with him, he answered, (which was a story he had made up on the way, because he knew Erasmus to be over-fond of novelties and wonderfully credulous,) that certain native Greeks had arrived in Paris, who were men of great learning, and who used a pronunciation of the Greek Language entirely different from that, which prevailed in these parts;

\* *Henry Ravensberg*, whom Vossius calls—“viri egregie docti, doctisque perfamiliaris.” See *Harvercamp’s Sylloge*, tom. ii. p. 628.

as for instance, instead of calling  $\beta$ , *veetah*, they called it *batah*; for  $\eta$ , *eetah*, they said *atah*; for  $\alpha$  [ sounded *a*] they said *aye*; for  $\alpha$  [ sounded *ee*] they said *oy*, &c.\* As soon as Erasmus heard this account, he wrote his *Dialogue* on the true pronunciation of the Greek and Latin languages, that he might appear to be the discoverer of this new method, and offered the work to *Peter*, a printer, at *Alost*, in order to have it published; but the printer declined doing it, either because he was engaged in other works, or because he could not undertake to publish it so soon as was desired, and Erasmus then sent the work to *Froben*, at Basle, by whom it was printed and immediately published. *Erasmus*, however, having discovered that a trick had been practised upon him, never afterwards used that pronunciation himself, nor did he direct his friends to adopt it. In proof of these facts, *M. Rutgerus* used to show, in Erasmus' own hand-writing, a manuscript system of pronunciation drawn up for the use of *Damian de Goez*, a Spaniard, which was not at all different from that adopted in all places where the language is used, both by the learned and the unlearned.<sup>†</sup> ‘*Erasmus himself* (continues *Wetstein*) had no faith in his own *Dialogue*. Who then shall require me to believe in it?’

\* The original is—*Eos nempe sonare pro B vita, beta; pro H ita, eta; pro a ae, Al; pro e i, oi et sic in ceteris.*

† “*Ipsius Erasmi manuscriptam, in gratiam Damiani a Goes Hispani pronunciationis formulam*” &c. After the words *pronunciationis formulam* there is, as *Havercamp* remarks, in the original of *Vossius*, this parenthesis—“(cujus exemplar adhuc apud me est.)” *Schedae autem qua superiora narrantur, ne quis ei fidem detraheret hoc modo, teste Vossio, subscriptur: Henricus Coracopetræus Cuccensis, Neomagi. clo l. lxix. pridie Simonis et Judæ. Hanc schemad, scriptam olim manu H. Coracopetræi, viri egregie docti, habere se profiteatur, isto loco, Vossius.”*

That he continued to follow the prevailing mode of pronouncing, is apparent from his familiar *Colloquies*, particularly that which is called *Echo*; where, to the word *eruditio*nis, Echo makes a response by ὄντος; to *episcopi*, by κόποι; to *ariolari*, by λάροι; to *astrologi*, by λόγοι; to *grammatici*, by ἰκτῆ; to *famelici*, by λύκοι; every one of which corresponds with the common pronunciation of Greek; which, if he had known it to be erroneous, he would undoubtedly in his subsequent editions have taken pains to correct: But so far from this, he not only adhered to it himself, but took particular care, that it should be taught to those, who were entrusted to his charge."

Such then, it should seem from this narrative, was the origin of the "new" or "reformed" pronunciation of the Greek language. The anecdote rests upon the authority of *Coracopetræus*; and doubts have been entertained, by some persons, of its authenticity. But those doubts appear to be founded, rather upon the singularity of the occurrence, than upon any want of credibility in the witness; for his character stands unimpeached, and the fact does not appear to have been questioned by the writers who lived nearest to that period. *Gerard John Vossius*, (who lived within a century after *Coracopetræus*,) a staunch Erasmian and sufficiently inclined to detect the falsehood of the story, if it were false, does not call it in question; but, on the contrary, speaks of it as a circumstance not known to many persons, and thinks it important to lay it before his readers, in order to make them acquainted with the motives, which impelled Erasmus to write on this subject;\* and he endeavours to account for Eras-

\* "Erasmus, qua occasione ad scribendum de Recta Pronunciatione fuerit impulsus, paucis cognitum arbitror. Itaque visum hac de re adjicere quod in

mus' not adhering to his new pronunciation himself, by supposing, that he abandoned it in consequence of the difficulty of overcoming his old habits, and of making the public follow him in his innovations, however well founded they might be.\* Nor does *Harercamp* (who was also an advocate for the Erasmian pronunciation, and from whom, as the editor of the controversial tracts on this question, we should naturally have expected an investigation of the truth of the narrative,) venture to deny it; but contents himself with remarking, that *he does not wish to discuss the credibility of the testimony of Coracopetræus*—“*de cuius testimonii veritate (says he) disputare nolumus.*” The narrative is also republished from *Vossius* by *Jortin*, in his life of *Erasmus*, without any intimation, that I have observed, of its being questionable.

That such a change, however, in the pronunciation of the Greek language should have been thus effected, seems at first view hardly possible. But when we consider, that by this change *Greek* was more assimilated to the languages of Europe in general, and consequently became more easy to the learner; and when we reflect upon the great influence of names at that period—

*shedæ quadam habeo, scripta olim manu Henrici Coracopetræi, viri egregie docti, doctisque perfamiliaris. Ea ita habet &c. and then Vossius relates the story at large.*

\* “*Verum cum Achillea sint pleraque omnia quibus ab Erasmo atque aliis refellitur vulgaris isthæc loquendi ratio, neutquam in animum inducere possum, quod Erasmus eam retinuerit, nec amicos ab ea deterruerit, id eo factum, quod editi libelli p̄seniteret; verum magis mihi verisimile fit, cum meliora videret probaretque, deteriora tamen sequutum; sive quid a puero sic loqui adsuevisset; sive quod desperaret suo se exemplo alios ad imitationem provocare posse; sive quod loquendum putarit cum vulgo, sapiendum cum paucis, ut p̄secepit τῆς ἀληθείας Philosophus.*” *Vossu Aristarch*, lib. i. c. 28.

of names too, which would scarcely have less authority in our own times, it will cease to appear extraordinary. And, as the *ancient Greek* was not studied for the purposes of conversation, the learned were willing to spare themselves the labour of studying its pronunciation. When, therefore, the idea was once published among Europeans of speaking Greek, as they did their own languages, and that method was defended too, as being nearer to the ancient, the contagion spread, and the pronunciation of the modern Greeks was by degrees neglected. The “*new*” pronunciation, however, was not received at first with much favour; so far from it, that a warm controversy arose among the principal scholars of that day, of which I shall incidentally give some account as I proceed; for a controversy, conducted by such distinguished advocates, cannot fail of being interesting to us, even after the lapse of several centuries. Whether, indeed, the anecdote above related of Erasmus is true or not, is of little consequence as to the merits of the present question. We can employ ourselves more usefully in examining the arguments, which were urged by him and his friends in support of their innovation, and the answers which were made by their adversaries; and this I shall now proceed to do, with as much conciseness as possible, from the principal writers in the controversy; adding such further observations, as are furnished by the researches and discoveries of our own times. In doing this, it will be most convenient to follow the order of the Alphabet.

## A.

The pronunciation of the letter *α* is undisputed. All scholars agree, that it was sounded by the *ancient Greeks* as it is by their descendants, and by all the nations of Europe at this day, except the English; that is, like what we call the Italian *a*, in our word *father*, &c. which sound, by itself, we should express in English by *ah*. It will not be uninteresting to see how minutely it is described by *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*: 'Αυτῶν δὲ τῶν μακρῶν ἐνθανότατον τὸ α, ὅταν ἐπείνηται λέγεται γὰρ ἀνοιγομένου τοῦ στόματος ἵκε πλεῖστον, καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ἄνω θερομένου πρὸς τὸν οὐρανόν: Of the long [vowels] *α* is the most sonorous, when it is prolonged (or a stress is laid upon it;) for it is uttered with the mouth wide open, the breath being at the same time impelled upwards towards the roof of the mouth.\*

## B.

The ancient pronunciation of the letter *Beta* has been the subject of much controversy. The *Modern Greeks* pronounce it like our *V*, and call its name *βῆτα, veetah*; the followers of *Erasmus* on the other hand assert, that it should be pronounced like the Roman *B*, which, they at the same time contend, was anciently sounded in *Latin*, just as it is in *Italian* and other modern languages; but the correctness of this latter opinion, we shall find, there are many strong reasons for doubting.

The first, and principal argument of *Erasmus* (who indeed did not support his opinions on this subject with such an array of authorities as some of his followers) is founded upon a well known

\* *Dionys. Hal. de Structura Orationis*, sect. 14. edit. Upton, p. 94.

passage in one of *Cicero's* letters, where there are some remarks upon *equivoques*; among which Cicero mentions the word *bini*, ( sounded, as Erasmus takes for granted, *beenee*) which in *Latin* has a different signification from *βίνη* in Greek. Now, says Erasmus, if the Greek word was pronounced by the *ancient*, as it is by the *Modern* Greeks, *veenee*, the *Latin* word and the *Greek* one could not have been enough alike in sound, to have given room for a double meaning, any more than the two words *bini* and *vini* could have done in the *Latin* language. The same argument was afterwards much relied on by other writers in the controversy; the chief of whom were—*James Ceratinus*, a learned Dutchman, who in 1529 dedicated to Erasmus a short treatise on the Pronunciation of Greek\*—*Theodore Beza*—and *Henry Stephens*; to which number should be added *Adolphus Mekerchus* (*Metkerke*); whose treatise, however, is so gross a plagiarism from *Beza's*, that the editor, *Havercamp*, feels it to be a stain upon the Belgian character; and he feebly excuses it by remarking, that *Henry Stephens*, no very forgiving censor, had pardoned *Metkerke*, and (as is the fact) had made use of his strong arguments himself. Let us now see what answer may be given to the argument from Cicero.

Of the several writers, whose tracts in this controversy have been published by *Havercamp*, in his *Sylloge Scriptorum* before cited, there are three in defence of the pronunciation of the *Modern Greeks*; they are—*Gardiner*, the well known Bishop of Winchester and Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, who

\* *Ceratinus'* family name, according to the biographers, was *Tryng*; he was born at *Hoorn* or *Horn* in Holland; whence, according to the fashion of the age, he formed his name of *Ceratinus*, through the Greek *κίρις*, a horn.

wrote with no contemptible ability in reply to Sir *John Cheke*, and by an Edict as head of the University, positively forbade the teaching of the new or *Erasmian* method; *Gregory Martin*, who made a learned reply to *Mekerchus*; and *Erasmus Schmidt*, a German, whose concise, but learned and able treatise will be more particularly noticed in the course of this inquiry. Of these three writers, *Martin* alone seems to have attempted (and that not with complete success) to answer specifically the argument from Cicero. He agrees with *Mekerchus*, that the *Latin* and *Greek* words are made *alike in sound* by Cicero; but he asks him to point out, in what part of them the similarity exists. “*Si tu pugnes* (says he) *de β, quod sonandum sit ut B, ego de ε contendo, quod in eodem loco pronuncietur ut i,*” &c. “If you contend, that the resemblance in sound lies in the *β*, which is therefore to be pronounced like *b*, I maintain that it lies in the *ε*, which is to be pronounced like the letter *i*. If you reply, that the letter *i* among the Romans sounded like *ε*, take care lest, while you are over-solicitous to make them alike, you inadvertently establish a difference between them. For *βινει* in *Greek* you yourself, I presume, read *binei*; but *bini* in *Latin*, according to your own opinion also, must be read *beinei*; so that there is a marked distinction between the two.”\* The argument thus far does not seem by any means satisfactory; for if, as he contended (and as was the case) the *ε* and *i* were alike in *sound* but differed only in *quantity* still unless the *Greek β* and the *Latin B* very closely resembled each other, there could hardly have been room for

Gregor. Martin, *De Græcarum Literarum Pronunciatione ap. Havercamp.*  
*Syllog.* tom. ii. p. 587.

an *equivoque* that would be endured even by the gross ear of a foreigner, as Cicero was in respect to the *Greek* language. That there was such a resemblance can now be more satisfactorily shown, than it could have been at the time when *Martin* wrote; but the resemblance probably must have consisted in this, that the Roman *B* and the Greek  $\beta$  were sounded rather like the letter *V*, than the *B*, of modern languages. That the Roman *B* had that sound for a long period, is manifest from its being perpetually confounded with it in writing. *Martin*, indeed, intimates that he thought something of this kind probable—“*Superest alia conjectura* (says he) *quando jam ista necessario confundenda sint, ut dicamus b olim priscis Romanis aspiratè magis sonuisse quam nunc: non tamen ut in V consonante fit, labiis valde apertis, sed conjunctis magis et compressis, ut sit quasi b̄vini dissyllabum, quod hodie quoque apud Burgenses fit in Hispania, qui vestia pro bestia, vene pro bene exiguo admodum vocum discrimine prounsciant.*”

If *Martin* had been in possession of all the information, which the researches of later scholars have brought to light, he would not have expressed himself with so much hesitation on this point. He might have stated it not merely as a “conjecture,” but as an opinion supported by very strong evidence, that the Romans did for a long period pronounce their *B* so nearly like *V*, as in general not to be distinguishable from it, at least by the ears of foreigners; just as is the case with the *Spaniards* at the present day.\* In proof of this, it will suffice to refer to the authorities

\* I have often thought it probable, that the *Spaniards* and *Portuguese*, who were a Roman colony, may have retained more of the ancient masculine pronunciation of the Romans, though tintured perhaps with a *provincial* rusticity, than is

collected in *Heineccius*' elaborate edition of the well known work of *Brissonius*, *De Verborum quæ ad Jus Civile pertinent significacione*: A multitude of other instances may be found in *Gruter*, and other writers on Roman antiquities.

“ **B**, secunda alphabeti apud Latinos litera. Quum vero illa *Græcorum βῆτα respondeat*, hæc autem litera a Græcis ita pronuncietur ut ea et **V** Latinorum exprimere soleant, e. g. *Bητος* pro *Veis* apud Plutarch. in *Camill.* p. 129. *λίτειος* pro *Livio*, apud eum. in *Romulo*, p. 36. *φλάβια* pro *Flavia*, apud *Reines*. *Inscr.* adpend. p. 35. factum inde est, ut in vetustis monumentis, maxime quæ a seculo quarto prodierunt *fere perpetua sit literarum B et V permutatio*. Hinc in marmoribus apud *Gruter*, p. **DCLXXXI**, 7. **VIVIANUS** legitur pro *Vibiano* apud *Reines*. *Inscr. I, 45*, **BICTORINVS** pro *Victorino*; apud *Gruter*, p. **DCCXVIII**, 6, **ABITA** pro *Avita*, in l. 11. C. *Theod. de Cohortat*. **VASTAGA** pro *Bastaga*: Ut innumera alia præteream, inter quæ etiam est ridiculum illud a V. C. *Ev. Ottone* observatum apud *Fabrett.* p. 546. **CONVGI BENE BIBENTI**, pro *Bene Viventi*.”

From these instances and others, (which go back to a period but little subsequent to the age of Cicero himself,) it will appear, that for many ages there was little or no difference, in the ordinary pronunciation, between the **B** and the **V** of the Romans; and

to be found even in *Italy* itself; for the Latin language throughout *Italy*, which was the great theatre of the operations of their enemies, the Goths, must have been much corrupted by the constant and immediate influence of the language of those invaders; while the *provinces of Spain and Portugal*, being remote from that influence, might preserve the language, which they originally received from their Roman masters, in greater purity than the people of *Italy*.

consequently, between the Roman *B* and the Greek *Beta*. Perhaps their true sound was one between our *V* and *W*, like the *W* in German ; which would be formed by barely touching the upper teeth to the lower lip, instead of pressing them so strongly upon it as we are accustomed to do in pronouncing our *V*. That the Roman *B*, however, suffered some slight changes in sound at different periods, is not improbable ; and it might be hazardous to assert, that in the age of *Cicero*, it had exactly the same sound, which was given to it three or four centuries afterwards, when we find the inscriptions above referred to. If, however, we ascertain the pronunciation, which was used even at this latter period, it would be sufficiently near to that of the Augustan age, to satisfy the most fastidious ears of foreigners.\*

Another argument of *Erasmus* is, the common, though very inconclusive one, founded on the etymologies of *Latin* words from the Greek ; as that  $\beta\tilde{\epsilon}\varsigma$  in Greek becomes *bos* in Latin ;  $\beta\alpha\tilde{\alpha}\nu$ , *boare* ;  $\tau\upsilon\beta\tilde{\epsilon}\tilde{\alpha}\nu$ , *turbare* ;  $\beta\alpha\lambda\alpha\tau\iota\sigma\iota\sigma$ , *bal\sup{u}cum*, etc.† This also rests upon the assumption, that the Latin *B* and Greek  $\beta$  were both sounded like the modern *B* ; which, as we have just seen, for

\* Since these remarks were written, I have obtained a copy of the *Herculaneus, or Archeological and Philological Dissertations*, by *Drummond & Walpole* ; by means of which interesting work, the evidence of the similarity of the Roman *B* and *V* is now carried back to the Augustan age. In the tenth *Dissertation* the author (Walpole) observes—" *Capacio* has published some *Latin* inscriptions which were found at Herculaneum, without any comments on them. I shall point out what appears to be worthy of notice in them. In the first inscription we have *devitum* for *debitum*." The author then also adds—" I find the changes of *B* and *V* very common in the *early Christian* inscriptions, as *BIXIT* for *Vixit* ; *BIRGO* for *Virgo*." p. 172.

† *Erasm. Dialog.* p. 123.

a very long period, was not the case. But we can also, on the other hand, find a great number of Latin words, beginning with *V*, which are derived from Greek ones begining with  $\beta$ ; as *vado* from  $\beta\acute{a}d\omega$ , *volo* from  $\beta\acute{e}l\omega\mu\alpha\iota$ , *via* from  $\beta\iota\alpha$ , etc. which (to apply this reasoning) would prove that the Greek  $\beta$  and Roman *V* sounded alike.

Equally inconclusive are several other arguments adduced by the writers in this controversy; as, 1. That  $\beta\tilde{\eta}\tau\alpha$  is a *middle* letter between the smooth letter  $\pi$  and the aspirate  $\phi$ ; an appellation, which might properly be applied to it, whether it is to be sounded like *B* or like *V*.\* 2. That the very name, *Alphabetum* (which, says Metkerke, nobody pronounces *alphavitum*) shows that *Beta* ought to be sounded like *B*. But this is plainly assuming the thing in question. 3. That *Beta* is derived from the Hebrew *Beth*, by adding *a*; and hence the Greeks, when they write Hebrew or Latin words having a *B* in them, always write them with  $\beta$ , as may be seen in *Plutarch*, *Dion* and others. This argument is liable to the same objections as the others; and it will, moreover, presently be seen, that the argument from the *Hebrew* is directly against the Erasmic pronunciation.

But the argument, which is considered as the most decisive in favour of the Erasmic pronunciation of *Beta* (which was not, however, adduced in Erasmus' Dialogue) is the well known line cited by *Eustathius* from *Cratinus*, to mimic the bleating of a sheep.

\* Οὐδὲ ηλίθιος ὄσπερ πρόσατον, Βῆ, Βῆ, λέγων Καδίζει.

Now, says *Beza*, after citing this line, if the syllables *Bῆ*, *Bῆ*, express the bleating of a sheep, they must have been pronounced

\* Beza, p. 311. H. Steph. p. 446. Metkerke, p. 54.

→ Sec. p. 69

*be, be, and not ve, vo*; that is, (to express in *English* the sounds thus expressed by Beza in Latin) *bay, bay, and not vay, vay*.

While I was at college, studying Greek with the aid of no other book than my *Port-Royal Grammar*, (which, with all its excellencies, contains but little on the subject of *pronunciation*, because probably the learned author did not consider that as an essential part of his plan,) I was much struck with this argument; which then appeared to me unanswerable. Further reflection, however, has led me to think, that too much importance has been given to arguments drawn from this and other *animal sounds*; which, as they form no part of any human language, no nation has any settled conventional sign; or word, to express. We accordingly find, therefore, that not only people of different nations, but individuals of the same nation, represent such sounds by letters of very different powers. This did, in fact, happen within my own observation in the case of this very sound; for when I once asked Mr. Ciclitira and Captain Katara (at different times) how they would express it in *Modern Greek*, the former wrote it  $\mu\pi\acute{\epsilon}\iota\sigma$ ,  $\mu\pi\acute{\epsilon}\iota\sigma$ , that is *bay, bay*, and the latter  $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\iota\sigma$ ,  $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\iota\sigma$ , or *may, may*; and perhaps a third would have written it  $\mu\pi\acute{\alpha}\alpha$ ,  $\mu\pi\acute{\alpha}\alpha$ , just as we commonly do in English, *bah, bah*. But great weight has been attached to this argument, from the days of Erasmus to more modern times; when we find *Gibbon* remarking (though, perhaps, as much for the sake of indulging his spleen against the clergy, as of defending the *reformed* pronunciation) that this “monosyllable  $\beta\tilde{\eta}$  represented to an Attic ear the bleating of sheep; and a belwether is better evidence than a bishop or a chancellor.”\* I shall, therefore, state at large the answer, which was given to it

\* *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. 66.

three centuries ago by *Erasmus Schmidt*, in the Treatise I have already mentioned.

“As to the bleating of sheep (says he) whose cry is not *bi, bi*, [in *English bee, bee*] but *bē, bē*, [i. e. *bay, bay*,] it must be recollected, that in these and similar words, whose sound is an echo to the sense, we do not express with precision the inarticulate voice of brutes, which indeed itself is not always uniform. Thus the Greeks express the cry of a sheep by  $\beta\eta$ ,  $\beta\tilde{\eta}$ , which others express by *blä, bla* [*blay, blay*,] and the Latins by *ba, ba* [*bah, bah*,] from *balandi*; while others again express it by *ma, ma*, [i. e. *mah, mah*] or *mä, mä*, [i. e. *may, may*.] It cannot therefore be proved by this, that the  $\eta$  was exactly equivalent to the  $\epsilon$  or to the  $\ddot{a}$  or to the  $\alpha$ ; or that the  $\beta$  is exactly equivalent to the  $\mu$ . In like manner the Greeks expressed the *barking of a dog* by the verb  $\beta\alpha\tilde{u}\beta\epsilon\eta$ , whether it is to be pronounced *bau* or *bav*; but the Germans express the same thing by *miffen, meffen, maffen, muffen*, and sometimes by *hau, hau, hau*; thus using different vowels and different consonants. Shall we therefore say, that those letters all have the same power? *Aristophanes* expresses a dog’s barking by  $\alpha\tilde{u}$ ,  $\alpha\tilde{u}$ , that is, either *au, au*, or *av, av*; for different dogs sound it both ways.

“The voice of the *lark* we express by *lir, lir*, whereas that bird modulates its notes rather to the sound of other vowels than the *I*; and the Germans themselves call it from its voice, *lerche*. Shall we then argue, that *i* and *e* are the same?

“The *Latins* have named the cuckow *cuculus*, with the letter *u*, while the *Greeks*, from the same sound, have called it  $\pi\alpha\pi\pi\pi\alpha$ : Is the *o* therefore to be pronounced like the *u*; for the note of the cuckow has the sound of *u* more than of *o*? The sound is, *cuc-*

*uc*, not *cococ*, or as the innovators (the *Neoquætol*) pronounce it, *cöçöc*.

“The sound of a *trumpet* is expressed by *taratantara*; although we can imagine in it the sound of other vowels more easily than that of *a* only.

“The sound of a *lash* or *thong*, is expressed in *Plautus* by the word *tax*. Others express it by *kliszsch*, *klatsch*, *schmitz*, *schmatz*, *patzsch*, *peitzsch*, &c. Has *x* therefore the same sound with *tz*, or *tzch*? Or are these different vowels equivalent to each other? The same remark may be made of various other words of this kind”—

“Schmidt then adds, with some humour—“Nimis ergo infirmum fundamentum suæ pronunciationis posuere miseri illi *vervecæ*, qui vocem ovium substravere. Quâ tamen, si ita lubet, uti eos, imo et ovium more, tremulum  $\tau\circ\eta$  pronunciare facile patiemur.”\*

By this time, perhaps, this celebrated argument will appear to be less conclusive in respect to the sound of the *Beta*, than might at first view be supposed. The truth probably is, that the syllable  $\beta\tilde{\eta}$  was used in this instance, not because it perfectly represented the sound in question, but because (to *Cratinus*’ ear at least) it only expressed it with more exactness, than any other syllable to be found in the Greek language. And why is it not just as probable, that so long ago as when *Cratinus* flourished, this writer should have contented himself with a word, which was only an *approximation* to the true sound, as that the grammarians and lexicographers down to the time of *Phavorinus* (only three hundred years ago, when we know that the  $\beta$  had the sound of *V*)

\* Havercamp, *Sylloge*, tom. ii. p. 661.

should have transmitted this word from age to age, without ever intimating, that it was a poor imitation, because it began with a letter, which sounded like *V* and not like *B*? Yet it has been so transmitted to us; and *Phavorinus*, following *Eustathius* and the *Etymologicon Magnum*, makes no other remark than this—(after speaking of several other words which the ancients used to express various noises) 'Οι δε ἀντός (the ancients) φέσιν ὄμοιως μιμητικῶς καὶ Βῆ οὐ μὴν Βαὶ μίμησιν προσέπατον φωνῆς. Κρατῖνος,  
 'Ο δὲ ἡλίθιος μίστερ πρόσεπτον Βῆ Βῆ λέγειν βαδίζει.\*

Here, we find, that although *Phavorinus* notices the word so particularly, as to tell his readers, that the ancients wrote it *βῆ* and not *βὰ*, (which, in his time, we know were pronounced *vee* and *vay*) yet he says not a word implying, that it was an imperfect representation of the sound in consequence of its beginning with a *Beta*.

Another argument for the *Erasmic* pronunciation of the *Beta* is founded upon the practice of the Greeks in writing *Roman* names; in which case it is urged (and with truth) that they rendered the *B* by their *β*; as in *Fabius*, *Tiberius*, *Gabinius*, which they wrote *Φάβιος*, *Τιβέριος*, *Γαβίνιος*, etc.; and on the other hand, the *Romans* used their *B* for the Greek *β*, when they had occasion to write Greek names, as *Bacchus* for *Βάκχος*, etc. *Beza*, however, candidly admits, that this is by no means satisfactory; because the Greeks not only represented the Roman *B*, but the *V* also by *β*; of which he adduces some instances himself, as *Βερρῆς*, *Βαλέριος*, for *Verres*, *Valerius*, etc.; and it is a well known fact, that in *Roman* names, which had a *V* in them, the

\* *Phavorin.* 1186. v. *Λιτας*.

Greek writers made use of the letter  $\beta$  and the diphthong  $ov$ , indifferently, to represent that letter. Hence *Virgil* was called sometimes *Βιργίλιος* and sometimes *Ουργίλιος*; *Valerius* was either *Βαλέριος* or *Ουαλέριος*. Now, as the learned all agree, that this diphthong was sounded like the French *ou*, or the English *oo* (*which is also the pronunciation of the Modern Greeks*) it follows, that, whether the two *Roman* letters *B* and *V* sounded alike or not, the *Greek*  $\beta$  and the diphthong  $ov$  must have been alike; and consequently, that the *Beta* must have represented the *Roman* *V* with as much exactness, as the diphthong  $ov$  did. And it is certainly a striking fact, that this diversity of orthography, in writing foreign names, has descended to the *Modern Greeks*; for when they write names having a *V* (or a *W*) in them, they sometimes use  $\beta$  and sometimes  $ov$ , as may be seen in the following instances, taken from *Meletius' Geography* ;\* some of which, however familiar to us in our own language, will hardly be recognized in a Greek dress :

*V* rendered by  $\beta$  and  $ov$  :

<i>Beneria</i>	<i>Venice</i>
<i>Βερσαΐλλες</i> or <i>Ουρσαλία</i> ,	<i>Versailles</i>
<i>Bemont</i>	<i>Vermont</i>
<i>Begynia</i> or <i>Ουργυνία</i>	<i>Virginia</i>
<i>Πενσιλβανία</i> or <i>Πενσιλενία</i> ,	<i>Pennsylvania, etc.</i>

\* *Μελετίου γεωγραφία παλαιά καὶ νέα*, etc. the second edition, in 4 vols. 8vo. printed at Venice in 1807.

*W* rendered by  $\beta$  or *oo*:

Βασιγγτόν,	Washington
Βισκασσετ,	Wiscasset
Βιλμιγγτόν,	Wilmington
Όυαλλία,	Wales
Όυιλνα,	Wilna
Όυαটৰফৰ্ড or Βατৰফৰ্ড,	Waterford, etc.

But the most valuable and interesting monuments of antiquity, relating to the subject now under consideration, are the *Greek Versions* of the *Roman Law*, and the *Greek Commentaries* upon it. In those Versions and Commentaries, we do not merely find a few scattered proper names of Romans, written in Greek, as is the case in the small number of Greek historians, that have come down to our times; but in every page we meet with *technical and other words* of the Roman Law, which, as they could not be well translated, were adopted, almost in their native *Latin* form, and only written in *Greek characters*. Now, although these Versions will not be esteemed of so high authority, as the writings of the Augustan age, yet, when we find in them a great weight of evidence, proving, that the pronunciation of Greek has remained unchanged from the age of *Justinian* to the present time, (a period of about *thirteen* centuries,) we shall not readily believe, that any material change could have taken place in the comparatively short period of the *five* preceding centuries; which would carry us back to the Augustan age. I shall cite only a few examples as to the letter *Beta*. In some parts of the *Code*, the Emperor *Valentinian* is called in Greek Βαλεντίνιας, while in others, his name is writ-

ten Ὀυαλεττινιαρὸς.\* The Emperor Justinian's title of *Vandalicus* is commonly written Βανδαλικὸς, as in tit. xvii. 3.; and in the same law, the Latin phrase *post Vandalica trophyæ* is rendered by, μετὰ τὸ κατὰ Βανδίλων τρόπαιον; and the emperor's name is usually written φλα Βιος Ιουστινιανὸς. Of technical words, where the Latin *V* is rendered by the Greek *β*, we find innumerable instances, like the following—βακάντια (vacantia, sc. bona) βειτιγάλιοι, βινδικτα, βολουντας, μητρ-βίσος, μητρεάλλουμ, πρασ-σαρικάταρ, πριβάτα, προ-βιρίλι, σαμρα-βια, σιπούλαρι-βιολατι, etc. I will add but one instance more of this kind; which contains, at the same time, an example of the use of the letter *B* for *V*, and a rule of the testamentary law of the Romans, to which a professional reader may trace a rule of our own law: It is to be found in the curious work of *Eustathius Περὶ χρονικῶν διαστημάτων ἀπὸ ροτῆς ιας ἕως ἑταρῶν*: *De Temporalibus Intervallis à momento usque ad centum annos*; or, as we should say in technical language, *On Limitations, from one moment to an hundred years*: Εστιν λέπι μερῶν ὀφειλει ἀρχεσθαι ὁ κληρονόμος τοῦ INVENTARIΟΥ μετὰ τὸ ἀνοιγῆναι τὴν διαθήκην, etc. *Intra dies triginta debet hæres In Ventarium incipere postquam apertum fuerit testamentum*, etc.†

The argument also, which is founded on the Greek method of writing *Hebrew* words, and which has been adduced in support of the *Erasmian* pronunciation of *Beta*, is, in truth, against it; for it will be found, as both *Martin* and *Schmidt* observe, that the Greeks used their *β* to represent not only the Hebrew *ב* (both *without the Dagesh* and with it) but also the Hebrew *בּ*; as in *לְוִיָּדָא*, *אַבְרָהָם*, *אַבְרָהָם*, etc. instances of which may be found in every page of the *Septuagint*.

\* Cod. I. i. 3. and I. xii.

† *Eustath. ap. Cujac.* tom. i. 56.

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The letter *γ*, when single, has two sounds in Modern Greek. Before *α, ο, ω, ον*, it has, what we call in English, the *hard* sound of *G*, as in *game, gone*, &c.; but before *ε* and *ι* it has the sound of the Italian *J*, or our *F*: Thus (to take an example from *Velasius' Treatise*) *γίρας* is pronounced *yáras*; *γίρομαι*, *yeenomay*.

The former of these sounds is universally admitted by the learned to be the ancient one; but the latter has been much contested; and among the reasons for controverting it, *Metkerke* (copying from *Beza*, as usual) assigns this very extraordinary one—that we cannot give *two different sounds* to the same letter without acknowledging a degree of poverty in the Greek language, which is not credible! To which *Martin* very justly replies, that this reasoning is “*plane ridiculum*,” and only betrays *Metkerke*’s own “poverty of argument.” *Martin* then proceeds to defend it upon the ground of usage; which, so far as my inquiries have gone, is the only ground upon which it can rest; and this, surely, (if I may use a professional phrase,) is sufficient to throw the burden of proof upon those who condemn the pronunciation as spurious. It may, however, be further observed, that this soft sound of the *γ* might once have been similar to that, which is sometimes given to the *G* in English, in the words *guide*, *disguise*, &c. as if written *gyide*, *disgyise*; from which it may have naturally changed to the simple sound of *γ*, as we now find it. Indeed, in some combinations, it does take a sound which cannot be distinguished from this.

But the pronunciation, which was most controverted by some of the Erasmians, is that, which is given to this letter, when it precedes another  $\gamma$ , or  $\alpha$ ,  $\xi$ , or  $\chi$ ; in which cases the *Modern Greeks* give it the sound of  $n$ , as we have always been accus-

tomed to do, and as is now the practice in Europe. This pronunciation, so different from the usual sound of the letter *G* in European languages, was received from the Greek exiles themselves ; and as they could not have produced any other authority for it, than they did for the pronunciation of many other letters of the alphabet, that is, *their own invariable usage*, it seems surprising, that the learned were willing to tolerate this, any more than the other peculiarities of the *Modern Greek* pronunciation. It was, indeed, opposed with so much learning and ingenuity, by *Bеза* and *Henry Stephens*, that great doubt has been entertained, whether it was genuine. But, as we now have evidence, which, it is not saying too much, to call conclusive, (as will presently appear,) it will be a useful lesson to us, who are but *foreigners* as to this question, to recur to the *theoretical* arguments, which those eminent men and their followers have urged against it. It will teach us to be cautious, in questions of this nature, how we condemn the universal and very ancient usage of a whole people, whenever it happens to be repugnant to our own habits or prejudices.

*Bеза*, after some remarks on *Theodore Gaza* and the “grammarians,” asks, “why cannot the double *γ* be pronounced by the *Greeks*, as well as by the *Latins* in their words *aggrego*, *agger*,” &c. and he then goes on, in a decided tone, to assert, that “neither the double *γ* is to be found among the *Greeks*, nor the *γ* written before *ζ* or *χ*; and that what *Gaza* adds in his rule about the *ξ* is idle, because neither *γ* nor *ζ* are to be found before *ξ* among the *Greeks*; but the grammarians have been deceived in this matter; for they have not considered, (as he remarks with ingenuity,) that the copyists of books, before the invention of printing, did

not write in large or *capital* letters, but in *small ones*, fashioned after the *ancient capitals*, but still with some slight differences; and thus, in transcribing, they would by lengthening and widening the , before a  $\gamma$ , make it resemble the latter so much as to be mistaken for it.”\* He then informs the reader, that in a very old MS. of St. Paul’s Epistles, which was written in *capitals*, he had seen the following words written with a , instead of a  $\gamma$ :

ΑΝΓΕΛΟΣ, ΑΝΚΤΡΑ, ΑΝΚΑΛΗ.

However ingenious this conjecture of *Beza* may appear, and however well supported it may seem to be, yet it is all overthrown by the evidence now in possession of the learned, to which I have just alluded; that is, the *Herculanean Manuscripts*; which, as Dr. Burney justly observes of one of them, are “undoubtedly the most curious publication, on the whole, which has appeared since the revival of letters.”† I shall make no apology for introducing in this place a translation of the entire note of the learned editor on the pronunciation of the letter now under consideration. It is taken from the *second* volume of the Man-

\* *Beza*, De germana pronunciatione Græc. Ling. ap. *Havercamp. Syllog.* tom. i. p. 314, 315.

† See *Rees’ Cyclopædia*, art. *PHILODEMI DE MUSICA*. Dr. Burney states, that no copies of this work had reached England till 1801, (though it had been then published several years,) when “Dr. Cracherode procured possession of two copies.” It is honourable to our country, that we now have in this vicinity three copies, at least, of this interesting publication; one of which is in the Library of the University at Cambridge, and another in that valuable repository of literature, the *Boston Athenæum*. This institution, indeed, is the only one, I believe, that possesses the *second* volume of these MSS. containing part of the works of *Epicurus* and some fragments of a Latin poem. This volume was not printed till 1809.

uscripts, which contains a part of *Epicurus*. The note is to be found at p. 23, where the word *συνχρίσεις* occurs, written incorrectly with a *ν* instead of *γ*; upon which, the editor says to his reader—"It will be observed, that the original manuscript has here *συνχρίσεις*, with *N* instead of *Γ*; which is to be ascribed only to the inattention of the copyist. For you must take care, that you do not adopt the opinion of *Stephens, Beza*, and others; (cited by Jo. Simon, in his *Introductio Grammatico-Critica*, sect. 2.) who, because they found in a manuscript written in *capitales* the words *αργελος, αρχηρα*, written as *συνχρίσεις* is in this place, supposed, that the grammarians, when they directed *γαμμα* to be written for *ν* before the palatal letters, were deceived by the lengthened figure of the *ν*, which looked like a *γ*. Now in these *Papyri*, which are written in *capitals*, *γαμμα* is constantly written before the palatal letters, (although sometimes the transcriber erroneously departs from this orthography,) as may be seen in this very volume, (or *roll*) where, at col. ix, v. 12, you find *συγχρησιν* correctly written. In *Philodemus de Musica*, which we have published, you will see, that this orthography is constantly observed. Thus, Col. xvii, v. 31, *συγχαρειν*; ib. v. 44. *συγχειν*. Col. xxiv, v. 7, *συγγεινειν*. Col. xxvii, v. 18, *αγχινοιας*. Col. xxxiii, v. 22, *αραγχαιως*. Col. xxxviii, v. 32, *εγκεχρησηκασι*; but in the same place, the transcriber, nodding, (*ut in longo opero, &c.*) wrote at v. 38, *συνχαρακοσμησιν*, as I have there observed. This rule of orthography is constantly observed in the other *rolls*, which we have by us; and so closely is it followed, that sometimes, in the case of *two succeeding words*, when the last begins with *γ*, and the first should end with *ν* (as in *μεν γαρ*)

such first word is written with a  $\gamma$  in this manner, ΜΕΓ ΓΑΡ. Now this, unless I am mistaken, is a manifest proof that the  $\gammaαμμα$  had retained the sound of the *w*, although it might be pronounced somewhat more softly; as we at this day pronounce the words *angelus*, *anchora*; in doing which the tongue does not rise quite up to the roof of the mouth. If such were not the case, the letter *N* would not be so easily substituted for the *Γ* by the transcribers."

## Δ.

The letter  $\delta$  has the sound, which *Walker* calls in English the *flat sound of th*; as in our word *then*, which may be expressed with great exactness, as to sound, by the negative particle  $\delta\not\pi$  of the Modern Greeks, a corruption of the ancient word  $\delta\not\pi\delta\pi$ . This approaches so near to the common sound of the letter *D* in the modern languages, that it does not appear to have given occasion to much controversy. It must, doubtless, be defended, upon the ground of *usage*; which, one would think, should be as decisive in the case of this, as of its kindred letter, *theta*, which has been acquiesced in by the learned of all countries.

## E.

The sound of this letter, which is that of *e* in the European languages generally, is the same, substantially, with our *e* in the word *there*. This pronunciation of *s* is universally considered to be the same with that of the *ancient* Greeks.

## Z.

The pronunciation of the letter  $\zeta$  is also, in practice, undisputed: The learned of all nations agree in giving it the sound, which  $\mathbf{z}$  has in English; which is also the pronunciation of the Modern Greeks.

## H.

It has been the fate of this letter, as writers have remarked, to be the subject of as much controversy as any in the whole alphabet. *Erasmus* and his followers contended, that the *ancients* pronounced it like what they called long *E* in Latin; by which they meant a sound like *a* in our word *fate*. The *Modern Greeks* pronounce it like our *ee*; which is the sound given to it by the English, and which we have always been accustomed to give it. As far as respects ourselves, therefore, we have no dispute with the *Modern Greeks* about this letter. But the writers on the continent of Europe have generally considered that pronunciation as erroneous; it will, therefore, be necessary, to notice briefly the grounds, upon which the two modes are defended.

That this letter at one period had a sound differing in some respects from that, which it now has in Greece, must be inferred from the description given of it by *Diouysius of Halicarnassus*, which is different from his description of the sound of *Iota*; and this latter indisputably had the sound of long *e* (or *ee*) in our language. In the *Herculanean manuscripts* too, the  $\eta$  is sometimes used by the copyist, through mistake, instead of *Epsilon*. But there is also a great mass of evidence tending to show, that about the commencement of the Christian era or not long afterwards, the  $\eta$  and  $\zeta$  were both pronounced alike; and, if we can

ascertain the pronunciation of the language as far back as that period, it will be sufficiently near the classic ages of Greece, to satisfy the most fastidious ear of *foreigners*, as we are in respect to the language. The arguments on both sides of the question respecting the *η*, are very minutely stated (from various authors but not without remarks of his own) by *Velastus*, a Greek monk of the island of *Chios*, in the *Dissertation* to which I have before referred, and in which upwards of thirty quarto pages are devoted to this letter alone.\* I shall here only give a very general view of the reasoning on the subject; and, in doing this, it will be necessary for the present to assume as true, that the diphthong *ει* had the same sound with the *i*; which, by the aid of the *Herculanean Manuscripts*, in addition to the ancient monuments heretofore discovered, may now be proved beyond a doubt to have been the case.

In prosecuting this inquiry, we are enabled to go back at once to the twelfth century by means of the writings of the learned and venerable *Eustathius*; and he, it should be recollected, expressly informs his readers, that his *Commentary on Homer* consists chiefly of *selections from the works of others*, whom even in that age he styles “*the ancients*.” Among those writers, (upwards of three hundred and fifty in number, according to the catalogue in *Fabricius*,†) we do, indeed, find the names of philosophers and critics and grammarians from the very earliest periods of Grecian literature. Now *Eustathius*, in the course of his *Commentary*, gives several instances of what he calls *τραχύχησις*, or words, which

\* Thomae Stanislai Velasti, societatis Jesu, *Dissertatio de Literarum Græcarum Pronunciatione*, Romæ, 1751.

† *Fabric. Bib. Græc. tom. 1. p. 506.*

are alike *in sound* but different in *signification*; and as examples he gives these lines of Homer, among others, relating to the letter *η*:

Τὸν καὶ ὑπεδδεῖσαν μάκαρες, θεοὶ εὐδέ τ' ἔδησαν.

*Iliad. A. 406.*

χόλος δὲ μιν ἄγριος "ΗΡΕΙ·

"ΗΡΗ δὲ εὐκ ἔχαδε στήθος χόλον.

*Iliad. A. 23, 24.*

"ΙΠΙ θεὰ, τίς γὰρ σε θεῶν ἴμοι ἄγγελον ἤκε;

"ΗΡΗ με προέηκε.

*Iliad. Σ. 182, 184.*

Upon which last example he particularly remarks, that the Poet has here placed two words near each other, which form the most perfect kind of *parechesis*; which is, when the words are exactly similar *in sound*, but dissimilar in *signification and orthography*—Ἐγγὺς ἀλλήλων τίθησι, κατὰ τοιαύτην παρέχησιν, παντελῶς μὲν ἡχοῦσαν ταυτὸν, ἀνομοίοτητα δὲ ἔχουσαν κατὰ τὴν ἔννοιαν, καὶ κατὰ τὴν γραφήν.\*

In another instance (*Iliad. O. 148*, cited by *Velastus*) he uses even more emphatic language; for after citing these lines,

"Ηεη δὲ Απόλλωνα καλέσσατο δάματος ἵπτος

"Ιρί, Ζ' ἦ τε θεοῖσι μετάγγελος ἀθανάτοισι,

he remarks, that the poet describes *Iris* paraphrastically, as the messenger of the gods, lest the perfect similarity of sound in *ἥης* and *ἱρίς* should mislead one, and *Juno* should be supposed to have been called for by *Juno* herself.

\* *Eustath. p. 240. edit. Florent. 1730.*

But it is needless to multiply examples of this kind; and I shall merely refer to the two lists of words at the end of *Scapula's* and some other Lexicons; one of which (by *John Philoponus*, as *Henry Stephens* affirms) will carry us back to the seventh century, and the other, by *Ammonius*, to the fourth century; from which last work, we may proceed still farther back, by means of a writer there cited, by the name of *Didymus*; who thinks it necessary to point out the difference in *signification* between the two words  $\lambda\chi\tau\omega\gamma\zeta\tau$  and  $\lambda\iota\tau\omega\gamma\zeta\tau$ ; which, if they had been so unlike *in sound*, as the Erasmian pronunciation of  $\eta$  would make them, would not have been classed with the words in this Collection.

The argument founded on *translations* of Roman names into Greek is also applied in the case of the  $\eta$ , as well as of the other letters; and it is observed, that *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, and other Greek writers, rendered the Roman *i* by the  $\eta$  of their own language. But on the other hand, the *Roman* writers frequently rendered the Greek  $\eta$  by their own *e*. Again, it may be replied, that (as *Gellius* observes) the ancient Romans used *e* and *i* indifferently; and *Quintilian* informs us of the same fact; and, by way of example, he remarks, that the ear cannot plainly distinguish whether the Latin word *Here* has the sound of *I* or of *E*; and that in the works of many authors he found *sibe* and *quase* for *sibi* and *quasi*.\*

But the strongest argument from *translations* is derived from the *Oriental Languages*, because of their antiquity and permanency. *Velastus* alludes to this, but contents himself with referring the

Quintil. Instit. lib. 1. capp. 4 and 7.

reader to *Wetstein's Dissertation*. It is, however, urged with much force against the Erasmians, by *Martin* and by *Schmidt*. The former, in his reply to *Metkerke*, (who had incautiously adduced it as being favourable to his own cause,) thus presses his adversary : “ What shall I say on this point, *Metkerke* ; or rather what shall I not say ? In truth, when you appeal to the *Hebrews*, you betray your utter ignorance—*Hebreos prorsus non intelligis*—nor, as it appears, have you ever read a passage in their language. For what in the Greek is rendered by η, is in the Hebrew i long [that is ee] and therefore in *Greek* it must be pronounced in the same manner.” *Martin* then examines the Hebrew words referred to by *Metkerke*. *Schmidt* remarks, that in a multitude of Greek words which are retained in the *Syriac Version* of the *New Testament*, the Greek η is *always* rendered by *Hirik* and *never* by - or by - — thus,

אַפְנָכָה from οὐφᾶ, Matt. xvi. 18.

אַפְרִיקְלִיטָה from παράκλητος, John xiv. 16.

אַיִלָּה from διαβήνη, Matt. xxvi. 28, Luke i. 72.

אַרְנוֹנִים from παρνήλιος, Acts x. 1.

אַרְנִיכָּסְטָה from παντικόστη, Acts ii. 1.

אַרְטָמָרָה from οὐρανος, Acts xviii. 15.

with some other examples, which it is needless to particularize in this place.

It is only necessary to notice one other argument in this case ; which is the syllable Bη used by *Cratinus* (as before observed) to express the cry of a sheep. In addition to the remarks made under the letter *Beta*, I need only observe, (as *Velastus* does, after *Fabricius*,) that there were two writers of the name of *Cra-*

*tinus*, both of whom lived long before the time of Plato, Thucydides and Pericles; a period, to which no one will attempt to trace the pronunciation of the Greek language, and at which time the letter *η* might possibly have had the full sound of our long *a* throughout all Greece. But it is worthy of remark, that the word *Bῆ* is spoken of by *Suidas* and the author of the *Etymologicon Magnum* as an Attic word—BH, το μιμητικὸς τῆς τῶν προ-  
βάτων φωνῆς, οὐχὶ BAI, λέγεται Αττικῶς;\* an expression, from which we must infer, that the word in question was peculiar to the people of Attica; and that the people of other parts of Greece would have used another word, to express the same sound.

### Θ.

The *Modern Greeks* pronounce the letter *Θ* just as we do *th* in our words *thank, think, &c.* and this has always been admitted by the learned, from the days of Erasmus to our own times, to be the ancient pronunciation. Yet it is difficult to perceive, why the modern sound of this letter should not have been contested, as well as that of several others in the alphabet.

### I.

The sound of the letter *Ι* is also universally agreed to have been the same anciently, as at the present day; that is, like long *e* (or *ee*) in English; and so it is always pronounced on the continent of Europe.

\* *Etymol. Magn.* p. 196. *edit. Sylburg.*

## K.

The pronunciation of the letter  $\pi$  is also admitted to have been that of *k* in the languages of the present day; as the Modern Greeks always pronounce it.

## Λ.

The letter  $\lambda$  is supposed to have had anciently the common sound of *L* in the European languages. The Modern Greeks also give it the same sound before the vowels  $\alpha$ ,  $\epsilon$ ,  $\circ$ ,  $\omega$ ; but before  $\iota$  and  $\upsilon$ , it seems, they give it the liquid sound of *gl* in Italian; as I have remarked in the *Table of the Alphabet*, at p. 237. Whether this distinction was observed anciently does not appear.

## Μ.

The pronunciation of the letter  $\mu$  is supposed to have remained unchanged to the present day. It has the common sound of *M* in all the modern languages.

## Ν.

The  $\nu$  in Modern Greek, before  $\alpha$ ,  $\epsilon$ ,  $\circ$ ,  $\omega$ , has the common sound of *n* in the European languages; but before  $\eta$ ,  $\iota$ ,  $\upsilon$ , (as I am informed by the Greeks I have mentioned,) it has the sound of *gn* in the word *bagnio*; as I have before observed, in the *Table of the Alphabet*. European scholars use only the first of these sounds.

Another modification of the sound of this letter, among the Modern Greeks, takes place when it is followed by the consonants  $\beta$ ,  $\mu$ ,  $\pi$ ; in which case it slides into the sound of *m*.

This modification of *r*, though so natural a consequence of the combination of these letters, was utterly proscribed by the learned of Europe. *Mekerchus* asserts—"Now, that *r* ought always to be pronounced like *n*, and that before  $\beta$ ,  $\mu$ ,  $\pi$ , its sound should not be changed into *m*, is sufficiently proved by this; that it has neither the authority of the ancients, nor euphony, to recommend it, and that all the letters should sound as they are written; and the learned pronunciation is elegant and not difficult." He then adds, that he supposes "certain sciolists, who had more knowledge of *Latin* than of *Greek*, must have made this change, in consequence of their observing that the *Latin* prepositions *an*, *in*, and *con*, before *b*, *m*, *p*, in compound words, were changed into *am*, *im*, and *com*."\*

*Henry Stephens* also (following *Mekerchus*) peremptorily decides, that this modification of the *r* is the work of *sciolists*—"il-lud decretum (says he) quorundam sciolorum." He then argues, that this pronunciation occasions ambiguities and deformity in the language; and that "these sounds are like great monsters, which every man ought to attack with the club of Hercules;" and therefore we ought to reject this pronunciation. But the only reason he gives for his opinion is a remark of *Quintilian*, who says, that in *Greek* no word ends in *m*. The remark of *Quintilian*, however, does by no means warrant the inference thus drawn from it. Now, that the *r* anciently took the sound of  $\mu$ , when it was followed by any one of the letters  $\beta$ ,  $\mu$ , or  $\pi$ , it may be hazardous to affirm; but it is certainly a little remarkable, that, contrary to the opinion of those learned men, we find, in the *Herculanean Manuscripts*, evidence of its having that sound when it was fol-

\* *Mekerchi Comment.* p. 162.

lowed by the  $\beta$ . The learned editor of the manuscript of *Philodemus* states, that, is frequently substituted for  $\mu$  in that work; and he gives the following, as one instance of such false orthography; which must have been occasioned by the similarity of sound in that combination: “*Sæpe enim librarius noster v pro  $\mu$  scribit; ut hac ipsa columnæ videre est, v. 14, ubi αὐτολαμ-  
σανοῦσιν pro αὐτολαμβανοῦσιν, legitur; etsi col. 1. recte scripserat  
αὐτολαμβανοῦσαι et ταραλαμβανοῦσαι: quod ejus sive imperitis  
sive oscitantis tribuendum.*”\* Here, then, we have another instance, where the usage of the *Modern Greeks*, contrary to the theories of ingenious and learned Europeans, is confirmed.

## E.

The  $\xi$  always has the sound of *ks*, as well at the beginning, as in the other parts of a word; never, that of *gs* or *gz*, and much less, that of simple *z*, which we are accustomed to give it at the beginning of words. The sound of *ks* perfectly agrees with the description given of this letter by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who says, it is compounded of *z* and *s*, but does not intimate that it has any thing of the sound of *γ* in it.

## O.

The general pronunciation of *o* is as nearly like that of *o* in the word *nor*, as any sound which we have in English; but it may be more exactly described, as a sound between that and the sound of *o* in the word *no*. The learned make no question as to the antiquity of this pronunciation.

\* *Philodem.* col. ii. l. 27.

## II.

The letter  $\pi$ , it is universally agreed, had anciently the sound which it now generally has in Greece; that is, of the letter  $p$  in the modern languages. When, however, it is preceded by a *flat* consonant, (as *Walker* denominates that class of letters,) it is very naturally modified by it. Thus, if preceded by  $\mu$ , it takes the sound of  $\beta$ ; as,  $\alpha\mu\pi\tau\lambda\sigma$ ; is pronounced  $\acute{a}mbelos$ . Such modifications of the general sounds of letters are common in every language. In the present instance, we see, in the *Greek* language the letter  $\pi$  being preceded by a *flat* consonant, takes the sound of  $\beta$ ; in *Latin*, on the other hand, we have a well known instance from *Quintilian*, where the letter  $b$ , when followed by a *sharp* consonant,  $t$ , slides into the sound of  $p$ : “— ut cum dico obtinuit (says he) secundam enim  $b$  literam ratio poscit, aures magis audiunt  $p$ .”\* Whether the ancient Greeks thus varied the sound of the  $\pi$ , it is impossible to determine with certainty. But it will, most assuredly, be safer to follow the present usage of the *natives* of Greece, than to rely upon the theoretical opinions of *Mekerchus* and other *foreigners*, who assert without proof, that such a modification of the  $\beta$  is “ridiculous.”†

## P.

The pronunciation of the  $\rho$  is undisputed. It is agreed, that it has always had the sound which  $r$  has in modern languages.

\* *Quintil. Instit. lib. i. c. 7.*

† *Mekerch*, p. 162.

## Σ.

The sound of the letter  $\sigma$  is universally agreed to be, that of  $s$  in the languages of our own times. We sometimes give it the sound of  $z$  in certain combinations ; and it is, in fact, occasionally modified by other letters ; thus, the expression  $\dot{\nu}\dot{\iota}\dot{\sigma}\mu\sigma\nu$  would sound, to our ears, like  $\dot{\nu}\dot{\iota}\dot{\zeta}\mu\sigma\nu$ , in consequence of the *flat* consonant after the  $\sigma$ . But, generally speaking, we should take care to give this letter the pure sibilant sound of  $s$ .

## T.

The general pronunciation of the letter  $\tau$  is agreed to have been anciently the same that it now is in Greece ; that of the modern **T**. But the Greeks of the present day, when this letter is preceded by  $\nu$ , give it the sound of  $d$  ; thus,  $\tau\alpha\tau\epsilon\lambda\omega\tilde{\epsilon}$  is pronounced *pández*. This pronunciation was violently opposed in the Erasmian controversy ; but principally on the ground, that it was inconsistent, that the same letter should have more than one pronunciation ; and yet all the writers in that controversy (who were Frenchmen, Dutchmen and Englishmen) must have observed the like *inconsistencies* in their own languages. In this and other cases, where we have no evidence in the works of ancient writers, the *general usage* of Modern Greece ought to have great weight.\*

\* It should have been remarked under the letter **K**, that the same modification takes place in that letter, when preceded by a *flat* consonant ( $\nu$ ) as we find in the other two mutes,  $\pi$  and  $\tau$  ; thus,  $\iota\gamma\kappa\iota\phi\alpha\omega\tilde{\epsilon}$  is pronounced as if written  $\iota\gamma\gamma\iota\phi\alpha\omega\tilde{\epsilon}$ .

## T.

The Modern Greeks pronounce *v* like their *ι*, or like our *ee*. Strange as this may at first seem to us, there can be little doubt, as will presently appear, that this is extremely near its original sound; and probably, is exactly the sound it had as long ago as the *first century*. *Henry Stephens* and other French writers (and indeed most writers of other nations) have no doubt, that it was originally pronounced like the French *u*; and the description given by *Dionysius of Halicarnassus* of its pronunciation in his time, corresponds in a very striking manner, with that sound in the French language. After observing, that in pronouncing *u*, the mouth is rounded and the lips drawn towards each other, he adds—"Εσι δὲ ἡτοι τούτου τὸν περὶ γὰρ ἀντὶ τῆς χειλοῦ συσολῆς γενομένης ἀξιολόγου, πνίγεται, καὶ συνὸς εκνίστει ὁ ἡχος;—The *v* is inferior to this; for a remarkable contraction of the lips is made, and a slender stifled sound is uttered."\* Now the *u* in French borders so nearly upon our *ee*, that in learning the language, students, during their first awkward efforts to attain this difficult sound, generally pronounce it like *ee*. That the *v*, however, shortly after the time of *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, had the simple sound of *Iota*, is now rendered in the highest degree probable, by what we find in the *Herculanean Manuscripts*; where it is sometimes erroneously used by the copyist for the letter *ι*. The learned editor of *Philodemus* makes the following remark upon it: "Sic. v. 17, [col. vii.] pro διδαγμα habes δΥδαγμα, et v. 19, pro αχολασια, αχολασια, quæ omnia bonus

\* Dions. Hal. De Structura Orat. sect. 14. p. 96. edit. Upton.

Conrector fidenti oculo est prætergressus. Nonne autem hinc horum elementorum valde ad finem sonum apud veteres arguere licet?"\* Thus it appears, that the modern pronunciation of this letter may be traced back, with great probability, to the commencement of the Christian era; a period, which may properly enough be considered as classic. It should also be noticed, that in the present instance, the *v* is thus substituted for *s* in an *accented* syllable; which, if the *ancient Greeks* regulated their pronunciation by the *accents* as their descendants do, adds greatly to the force of the argument in this case; for an *accented* syllable would not be likely to be written with letters, which had not a very close affinity to each other in sound; whereas *un-accented* syllables, on the contrary, might be spelled with letters, which would not, of necessity, very closely resemble each other. This circumstance, by the way, will, as I am strongly inclined to think, explain many of the seeming contradictions in the arguments, which are founded upon the instances of false orthography in ancient manuscripts.

## Φ.

The letter *φ*, it is agreed, had anciently the same sound which is given to it by the Modern Greeks; that is, the sound of *F*. But, from the remark made by *Cicero* upon a Greek that could not pronounce *Fundanius*, but said *Fhundanius*, it was doubtless uttered more forcibly, or with a stronger compression of the lips, than the Latin letter.†

\* Philodem. p. 36.

† See Quintil. lib. i. c.

## X.

The learned all agree, that the letter  $\chi$  was pronounced by the ancient Greeks with a strong aspiration; like the *ch* in German, or, much as the letters *gh* final are pronounced by the Irish and Scotch. The *Modern Greeks* give it the same sound.

- That it had some resemblance to the *x*, appears from its being sometimes substituted for it in writing; as in the instance above cited from the *Herculanean Manuscripts*, under the letter *T*, where  $\alpha\chi\omega\lambda\alpha\sigma\iota\alpha\tau$  is written for  $\alpha\bar{\chi}\omega\lambda\alpha\sigma\iota\alpha\tau$ .

## Ψ.

The pronunciation of the letter  $\psi$  is undisputed. It is admitted by all, that it had the sound of *ps*; though occasionally modified by the other letters, so as to sound sometimes like *bs*.

## Ω.

The *Modern Greeks* pronounce the  $\omega$  just as they do the  $\circ$ ; and it seems to be undeniable, that anciently they differed only in quantity but not in sound. Before the discovery of the *Herculanean papyri*, it had been observed that they were frequently interchanged by transcribers; and we now find the same thing in those manuscripts. The editor of *Philodemus* has this remark upon it, col. xvii, v. 14; where he says we should read (to use his language) "pro  $\alpha\mu\iota\sigma\iota\sigma\tau$  fortasse  $\alpha\mu\iota\sigma\iota\sigma\tau$ , v. 16, pro  $\tau\omega\mu\sigma\tau\omega\mu\sigma\tau\omega$  refingendum  $\tau\omega\mu\sigma\tau\omega\mu\sigma\tau\omega$ ."<sup>\*</sup>

A few remarks upon the sounds of the *diphthongs* will conclude what I have to offer at present upon this subject; but before ex-

\* *Philodem.* in not. p. 78.

amining each one by itself, it may be proper to notice an objection, which is applicable to the modern pronunciation of them all. *Erasmus* contended, that in all of them, the sound of both the component letters should be heard. Otherwise (says he) “ why are they called proper diphthongs, unless the syllable gives the sound of the two vowels ? ”\* *Beza*, and after him, *Metkerke*, and various other writers, hold the same language ; and think, that, as the very name of *diphthong* means a combination of two *sounds*, therefore they must have been pronounced in that manner, and not according to the practice of the Modern Greeks, with one simple sound only ; for if this were the case, they argue, these combinations of letters would not have been called *diphthongs*, but *di-graphs*. At this day it seems truly surprizing, that the writers in the controversy (who were Dutchmen, Frenchmen and Englishmen) should have overlooked the circumstance, that the same abuse of the term *diphthong* was to be found in their own, as well as in other languages. To apply their rule, therefore, those foreigners might argue, in respect to the English language, that there are certain combinations of vowels in it, which Englishmen call *diphthongs* ; and as they are called *diphthongs*, and not *di-graphs*, they must be uttered in such a manner, that the two sounds shall be heard ! The mere application of the reasoning to our own language, shows its fallacy.

## AI.

This diphthong is pronounced by the Modern Greeks like *ɛ*, or our *a* in *fate*. This pronunciation may be traced back, by means of the *Greek* writers, with perfect certainty to the twelfth

\* Erasm. Dialog. p. 89.

century. *Eustathius* (as quoted by the writers in the controversy) after citing the following line from *Homer*,

Αλλὰ τίθεσθε δὲ ὑμμες, ἵτει τίθεσθαις ἀμεινον,

remarks, that “τίθεσθε and τίθεσθαι though they differ in their letters are exactly alike in sound ;” and the same is the case, as he says, in this passage—Οφθήσῃ ΚΕΝΟΣ ἵναντος μου, ἀλλ’ ἀλλοι τρόποις ΚΑΙΝΟΣ ; “for here *κενός* and *καινός* have the same sound.” Several other passages might be adduced from Greek writers to the same effect, though not so decisive as these. I do not find any, however, which carry us back to the first century ; nor, on the contrary, do we find any remarks of these writers, which give the least intimation, that any change had taken place in the pronunciation of their language.

In the case of this diphthong, however, as in that of the letter *η*, we have evidence of this pronunciation of sufficiently high antiquity, in the *Oriental* languages. Schmidt observes, that in the *Syriac* Version of the New Testament, not only the Greek *ε*, but the diphthong *αι*, in those Greek words which are retained in the version, are expressed both by *tsere* and *segol* ; as, *κεφάλαιον*, *קְפָלָן* ; *καισαρία* *קְסָרִיָּה* ; *sis τραιτάριον*, *לְפָרְטוֹרִין*, &c.\*

#### ΑΥ.

The Modern Greeks pronounce this diphthong sometimes *af* and sometimes *av*, as observed in the Table of the alphabet. The argument of greatest antiquity is founded on a remark of Cicero, in his treatise *De Divinatione* ; where he says, that when *Marcus Crassus* was embarking his army at Brundusium, some person

\* Schmidt, *De pronun. Græc.* p. 688.

who was there selling figs brought from *Caunus*, cried, *Cauneas* [i. e. either *Kavrias*, the Greek name or *Cave ne eas*] which was considered as an omen against his proceeding. "Hence (says *Erasmus Schmidt*) it is apparent that the Greek diphthong *av* very nearly corresponded to the Latin *av* as pronounced in the word *Cave*." In addition to this, *Schmidt* again resorts to the *Syriac* Version; where, as he says, the *v* in *av* and *sv* is rendered by *ו*, so as to sound like *V*: פּוֹלָם from Παῦλος; פּוֹרִים from Κλαύδιος, etc.

The most important argument *against* this pronunciation of *av*, is founded upon the well known passage of *Aristophanes*, where the barking of a dog is expressed by *av, av*; from which it is inferred, that this syllable must have been pronounced like *ow* in our word *how*; it being taken for granted, that *Aristophanes* used a word, which expressed the barking of a dog with exactness. But he might have used a word which was merely an *approximation* to the sound; and this will appear to have been the case. In addition to the observations under the letter *Beta* 26 (p. 250) upon the uncertainty of arguments derived from *animal sounds*, I will only make one or two remarks applicable to this particular word. It is evident, from what has been already observed, that the letter *v* must have been pronounced either like the French *u*, or like *ee*: This syllable then, if not pronounced *av*, must have sounded like our word *aye*; which no one will think quite so near the barking of a dog, as the present pronunciation, *av, av*. *Aristophanes*, then, must have adopted this word as an *approximation* to the sound in question.

## EI.

The arguments in support of the Modern Greek pronunciation of this diphthong appear to be unanswerable. Indeed some of the writers on the *Erasmian* side concede the point. Without repeating the remarks of *Eustathius* and other writers, who may be thought not sufficiently *ancient*, I will only add to the observations made under some of the preceding letters, the following, from the *second* volume of the *Herculanean MSS.* which, at the same time, contains an important remark respecting the *accentuation* of words. After noticing the word *ευχοδειας*, written with *ει* instead of *αι*, the editor says—"Quod autem pro simplici iota descriptum habeas *ει*, id somnolento calligrapho tribuas, qui saepe non secus ac alii horum voluminum exscriptores, ut jamdudum observavimus, hujusmodi litterarum *εναλλαγη* facit. Et ne longius abscedas, mox hac ipsa columna v. 14, *ἀρριστίας* pro *ἀρριστίας* descriptum invenies. Id autem argumento nobis esse debet, non modo diphthongum *ει* affinem sono fuisse *τει*, sed etiam hujusmodi voces penultima longa solitas fuisse efferti."\*

In the ancient *Greek Inscriptions* published by Dr. Clarke in his *Account of the Greek Marbles*, we also find evidence of the same kind respecting the *ει*: Thus, p. 5. ΤΕΙΜΟΘΕΟΣ ΔΑΣΕΙΟΣ ΧΑΙΡΕ ΤΕΙΜΟΘΕΟΣ, etc. Again, at p. 44. Η ΒΟΥΛΗ ΚΑΙ Ο ΔΗΜΟΣ ΕΤΕΙΜΗΣΑΝ ΤΙΤΟΝ, etc.

\* *Epicur.* lib. xi. col. vi. p. 50.

EX.

There does not appear to be any direct evidence in the *Greek* writers of very ancient date, proving the sound of this diphthong to have been *eo* or *ef*, as the Modern Greeks pronounce it. If, however, there is reason to believe that *au* was pronounced *av* or *af*, the argument from analogy will apply with much force. But though we find nothing decisive in the *Greek* writers, yet we have evidence in this case also from the *Oriental* languages; for, according to *Erasmus Schmidt*, in the *Syriac Version*, *eu* is rendered by ܐ, of which he gives the following instances:

from *אָוְתִיכָם* *Eutuχος*, Acts xx. 9.

אֹהֶד' אָ from 'Eusodία, Philip. iv. 2.

oi.

The diphthong *oē* is pronounced by the Modern Greeks exactly like *oe* in some English words derived from the Greek, or like *ee*. The antiquity of this pronunciation has been much contested. Most of the writers in the Erasmian controversy seem to have been of opinion, that the Greeks pronounced it just as *oi* is pronounced in the *French* language. The principal reason for this opinion was, the general one mentioned above; that a *diphthong* must have two sounds; an hypothesis, which is falsified by what every one of those writers must have found in his own language. That this diphthong has for many centuries had the sound of our *ee*, is proved by the same kind of evidence as above adduced in the case of some of the other diphthongs; that is, the mistakes of the transcribers of manuscripts; for they constantly substitute the

*oι* for *η* and *ι*. *Velastus* cites a striking remark on this subject of as old a date as the beginning of the fourth century. “Who (says he) has not heard of the complaints of *St. Jerom, Augustine, and Eucherius*, in respect to the word *Cenomia*; which, as it was written by the *Greeks*, sometimes *κηνομία*, sometimes *κυνομία*, and at other times *κοινομία*, in consequence of the identity of sound in all these words, occasioned infinite trouble to the interpreters of holy writ.”\* But the most ancient, and I think the most decisive, testimony in support of the modern pronunciation of this diphthong is, the passage, cited in the controversy, from *Thucydides*. This author, in his unrivalled description of the *Plague of Athens*, informs us, that during that calamity, the following verse, (which aged people said had been sung of old,) was, among other things, brought up to recollection :

“*Ηξι; Δωριακὸς τόλεμος ςαι; ΛΟΙΜΟΣ ᾁμ' ἀντρ̄.*

Upon which he remarks—“that a dispute arose among people, whether the oracle meant *λοιμός*, a *pestilence*, or *λιμές*, a *famine*. Their present sufferings (he adds) made them suppose the former was the word; for they adapted the oracle to the calamity of the times. But I am of opinion, that in case of another Doric war, if a *famine* should take place, they will be equally ready to apply the verse to that event.” Now, if the two words in question were not pronounced alike, there could have been no room for this ambiguity; and to all the objections of those, who reason upon this verse, as if it had been in *writing*, it is a sufficient answer, that the oracles were delivered *orally*.†

\* *Velusti Dissertat.* p. 80.

† This pronunciation of *οι*, it need hardly be observed, will destroy all the supposed force and beauty of our lofty *πολυφλοίσσοι Σαλασσοί*; which we apply

## OT.

It is generally admitted by the learned, that the *ancient* Greeks pronounced the diphthong *ov* as their descendants do; that is, like *ou* in our word *you*, or like *oo*.

## HT.

This is sounded by the Modern Greeks like *eev*. I have not found any particular remarks upon this diphthong; but the general reasoning in respect to the *av* and *ev* will, in a degree, be applicable to it.

## TI.

The sound of this diphthong is scarcely to be distinguished, except in length, from either of its two component letters taken alone. This pronunciation must undoubtedly be defended upon the ground of *usage*; I am not aware of any direct evidence relative to it in the Greek writers.

to the roaring of the *ocean*. But the following remark (from an intelligent writer before cited) will, at least, make us doubt of the justness of that application: "I must here add, that these men [some modern Greeks] confirmed an observation of our late revered and lamented President, that we are much mistaken in our idea of the supposed lofty sound of *πολυφλοίσθεος θαλάσσης*; that the Borderers on the coast of the Archipelago take their ideas from the gentle laving of the shore by a summer wave, and not from the roaring of a winter ocean; and they accordingly pronounced it *Polyphlisveo thalasses*."<sup>\*</sup> The Greeks, I have conversed with, pronounce it in the same manner, and accenting the antepenultimate of the first word, and the penultimate of the second.

\* Observations on the Greek Accents, by Arthur Browne, Esq. in the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. vii. p. 370.

## ΩΥ.

This diphthong rarely occurs ; it is pronounced *oav* or *oaf* according to the consonant that follows it.

The improper diphthongs  $\alpha$ ,  $\eta$ ,  $\omega$  require no particular remark ; as the Modern Greeks, like ourselves, pronounce them just as the simple letters are pronounced without the subscribed *Iota*.

In addition to these particular observations on the letters, I cannot but call the attention of the members of the Academy to a few facts, which well deserve the consideration of scholars. Of these, a very important one is the *universality* of the pronunciation of the Modern Greeks ; which is found to be substantially the same in the islands and other parts of Greece, quite remote from each other and having little or no connexion by means of commerce or otherwise. Another remarkable circumstance is, the use of *ancient Greek* in their Church-service ; which has been continued from the first propagation of Christianity to the present day. Now the just pronunciation of the language of their Church-service has ever been scrupulously attended to ; and the present mode has been handed down with extreme care from the earliest periods. The *nation* itself, also, remains to this time a distinct race of people ; and it should be recollectcd, that the oppression of their Turkish conquerors has only served to keep them the more embodied, and the less liable to the effects of a necessary intercourse with each other.

How cautious then ought we, as foreigners, to be in condemning the invariable usage of a people thus circumstanced, in such a question as the pronunciation of their language. We perceive that the most eminent scholars have entertained opinions respect-

ing it, which later discoveries have proved to be unfounded. At one period, for example, it was contended by the learned of Europe, that the *γ* before *γ*, *ζ*, &c. was not to be pronounced like *ν*; that *ς* was not to be sounded like simple *ι*, &c. as the *Modern Greeks* pronounce them. These opinions now appear to have been erroneous, and the usage of the *Modern*, is found to be conformable to that of the *ancient Greeks*. The learned also once thought, that the *ancient Greeks* used only *capital letters*, and that the *small letters*, now used, were the invention of the lower ages; but an inscription found in *Herculaneum* in these very characters has obliged them to abandon that opinion. They believed too, and with much ingenuity had almost proved, that the *Greek Accents* were of comparatively modern origin; but here again, unfortunately, the same *Herculanean Inscription* confuted their theories. In almost every instance, in short, where the opinions of the learned have been at variance with the usage of the *Modern Greeks*, whenever any evidence has been discovered relating to the point in controversy, the theories of the former have proved to be unfounded, and the usage of the latter confirmed.

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I have thought it might be interesting, to some persons, to subjoin to this communication the following letter in *Modern Greek*, written by Mr. *Ciclitira*, of which a *fac-simile* is annexed. Those persons, who have not paid much attention to the language of *Modern Greece*, will, I am sure, be surprized at the resemblance of the words, and not less surprized to see the *accents*, *breathings*, &c. used so much in conformity with the rules in our grammars of *ancient Greek*. And on the subject of the *accents* (which I

shall consider in a future paper) I cannot avoid submitting one fact to the consideration of scholars—that the Modern Greeks always pronounce according to the accents ; and, in speaking, they place the accent (or stress of the voice) exactly where the rules of prosody require us to place the *written* accent. For example: The word *ἄνθρωπος*, in the nominative case, they pronounce *án-thropos*, following the *accent*, and disregarding the *quantity* of the long vowel in the penultimate ; but in the *genitive*, where the rule of prosody requires us to accent the penultimate because the final syllable is long, they place the accent (or stress of the voice) on the penultimate, also ; and *ἄνθρωπον* is then pronounced *anthro-poo*. This is noticed in the *Dissertation of Arthur Browne Esq.* before cited ; and I have myself constantly found it to be the case both with Mr. Ciclitira and the Greek Captain.

*Translation of the annexed Greek letter.\**

SIR,

I perceive that your colleges here do not differ in the least from those of England as to their studies either in philosophy or literature. But, what shall I say? Though they are adorned with the higher sciences and the languages, and possess so much learning, yet I have heard the *Greek Language* read with an irregular pronunciation of the syllables, with false accentuation, without proper cadences, and, in short, without the least Greek utterance. With some reason then I may observe, that instruction in this is yet wanting ; and I have therefore presented myself before this illustrious nation, and have engaged to teach, to any who may desire it, the *Greek pronunciation* ; being myself a

\* See Pl. IV.

native of the Peloponnesus, and from the city anciently called *Pylos*, but now *Navarinos*, in which same country I learnt the language and pronunciation.

Further I will observe, that besides the pronunciation, if any shall desire to learn to *write*, I will instruct them in my mode of writing, which is conformable to the *writing letters* which are now used in our colleges. These; and I with all respect I remain,

your humble servant,

NICHOLAS TZIKLITEERA.

Boston, the 2d Feb'y, 1818.

NOTE.

Page 356, line 3 from the bottom. The passage from *Cratitus* is commonly cited as I have here given it; and so it stands in the *Etymologicum Magnum*, p. 196, edit. *Sylburg.* and in *Phavorinus*, p. 1186. But in *Suidas* (as quoted by *Constantine*) the first part of the line is—*O δι λοισθιος*, etc. This difference may probably be accounted for, by the *ι* and *οι* being both pronounced alike. Which of the two is the true reading it may not be easy to determine; nor is it of any consequence in the present case. It may, however, be observed, that the latter reading is supported by the Lexicon of *John Zonaras*, p. 387, which has—*O δι λοισθιος*, etc. This valuable work, as well as the long desired Lexicon of *Photius*, after slumbering for centuries among the manuscripts of the libraries of Europe, has lately been given to the public by the indefatigable zeal and perseverance of the scholars of Germany. I call it *Zonaras' Lexicon*, after the editor, *Joh. Aug. Henr. Tittman*, who gives several reasons of some weight for ascribing it to that author. Nor does the circumstance mentioned in his

*Prolegomena*, p. 33, affect the probability of his supposition ; though the learned editor seems to be at a loss how to account for it. He observes of one of his Manuscripts—" In folio singulari, quod post thecam ad compacturam Cod. pertinet, legitur : Arsenii cuiusdam *Lexicon Græcum*. Hinc etiam in Catalogo Nesselii impresso et deinde in bibliotheca Fabricii sub titulo illo commemoratur. [Vol. vi. p. 631, ed. nov. Nessel. part iv. p. 74.] Sed quæ causa fuerit, cur Arsenio, nescio cui, hoc opus tributum sit, frusta rescire cupio, neque de Arsenio quodam, Grammatico aut Lexici auctore, mihi quidquam constat." The source of this blunder in the MS. (for a blunder it certainly must be) is, I think, discoverable upon examining the Lexicon. The words are all arranged in five classes—masculine, feminine and neuter nouns, verbs and adverbs, which last class comprehends the other parts of speech. Now it happens, that the first class of words under the letter *A*, consists of *masculine* nouns, and it is accordingly entitled *Αρσενικός* ; which word, being seen at the head of the MS. would be mistaken, by some owner of it, for the name of the author. If the work had begun with the class of *feminine* nouns (*Θηλυκός*) we might perhaps have had *Θηλυκός Lexicon*.

## ERRATA.

Page	13	line 28 for λίμος read λιμός.
"	"	λοίμος read λοιμός.
18	12	ε, ai, oi, ait, oit, read έ, αι, οι, αιτ, οιτ, etc.
31	17	balucum read balneum.
51	11	137 read 13.
61	19	250 read 26.

Sw' doyoðaðu Kupis' swarrz Iu' Thinegrz.

Κύριε μας Χαίρε .

Ἴησος Ἰδίοις δέρψω ὅτι ἐγώ ἐστιν ὁ παραδότες τοῦ ἀρι-  
στοῦ, ἢντις, ἢντις ἡρακλῆς, ἢντις ἡρακλής, δέρψω Ἰδίοις  
παραδότες Ἰησος Ἰδίοις παραδότες Χαρακτήρας με, ὅτις γίνεται  
χιαδαῖς, εὐόρα, γερίνα, γρασίμιας, ὅτις ουραδίκη γε τοῦ  
Ἐλλάδος Λαζαρίνα σχολίαμα. Ταῦτα, ἢντις ὁ παραδότες  
οὐτες σφρωματορδας σας περιών.

Major 2<sup>nd</sup> Regt. 1818.

Ἵστοριος οὐδεὶς  
ταῦτα δέοντας  
εἰπεντος.











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